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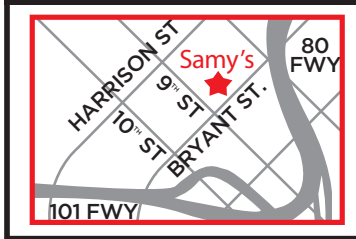

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Best of San Francisco 2017

By Peter Lawrence Kane

When ideologues bash California as a gargantuan failed state mired neck-deep in political correctness at the expense of public safety and economic growth — which, of course, we're not — one common retort is heard most often: If we were an independent country, California would be the sixth-largest economy in the world.

There's truth to that, of course. But the downside is that the incredible wealth found in early-21st-century California is out of balance, and the money that's poured into the Bay Area since the recession and housing crisis has caused a large proportion of what made San Francisco unique to evaporate. Rents are, in a word, ridiculous — and allegedly left-wing California forbids jurisdictions from implementing commercial rent control. The city's Legacy Business Program aims to stanch the bleeding, but it can only do much.

For good or for ill, capitalism giveth and capitalism taketh away. Against this backdrop, the plucky small businesses that remain are, to us, superheroes of a sort. They've held on and even thrived, simultaneously beneficiaries and victims of the new prosperity. And from boutiques to breweries, there's always something new to check out. So we invite you to thumb through our annual guide to the Best of San Francisco — newly expanded in scope to include all the cannabis-related products and businesses out there — with a sense of optimism that S.F. has a ton of worthy stuff to check out. (Naturally, we put in some silly stuff, too, 'cause this is kind of a silly town.)

When tech startups come along and landlords nix renewing leases on favorable terms, these are the businesses that go "Pew pew pew!" and shoot lasers. Let's show them a little love.

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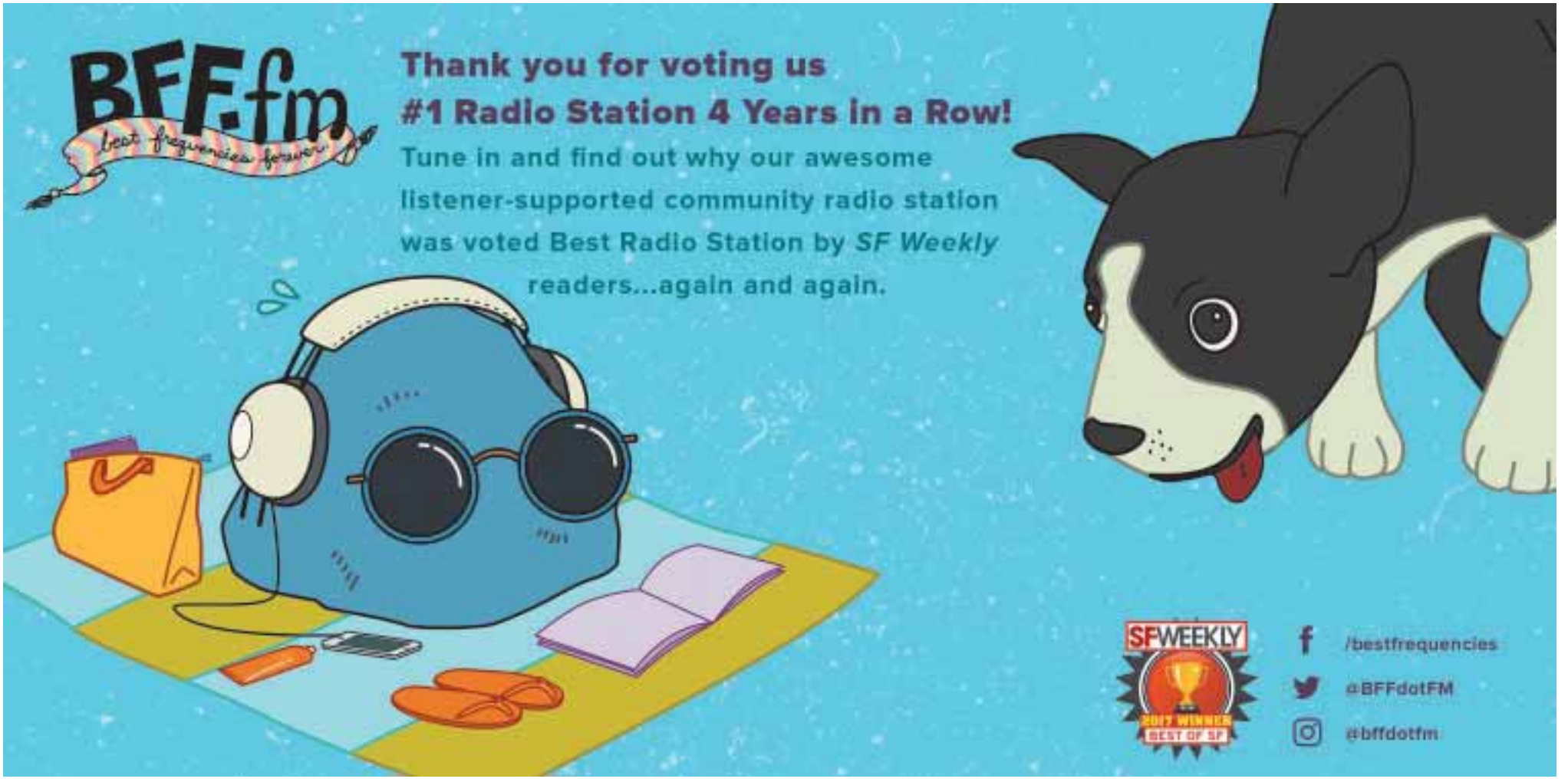

Best Holiday That Never Turns Out Well

The Fourth of July

San Franciscans love fireworks, even when the fog is so thick that one can hardly see their hand in front of their face. July is predictably miserable in the city, with temperatures rarely rising above 65 degrees and a wall of fog that envelops everything after 5 p.m. Ever the optimists, July 4 organizers still bring out the big bangs on the patriotic day, setting off fireworks that most people can only hear, not see. Best of luck on the nation's 241st birthday this summer, everybody.

Best New Lottery to Crush Your Dreams

Hamilton at the Orpheum Theatre

1192 Market St., 415-746-1799 or hamilton.shnsf.org

We've all played the lottery and had our dreams dashed when the numbers are revealed. Now, thanks to Broadway's smash hit Hamilton, there's a new lottery at the Orpheum to get your hopes up. Available online, the Hamilton lottery allows interested parties (read: the entire city of San Francisco) to enter to win one or two prime seats for a future performance for the mouth-watering price of $10. (Ham4Ham — get it?) Each show has 40 dedicated tickets, but given the unending thirst folks have for a musical about the Founding Fathers and hip-hop, your odds of hitting the jackpot remain the same as Alexander Hamilton's chances of being elected president after he published the Reynolds Pamphlet.

Best Cult Video Game

Killer Queen, at Brewcade

2200 Market St., 415-872-5310 or brewcadesf.com

At a cursory glance, Killer Queen is a remarkably simple game. You play (as bees) in teams of five on a 10-player arcade console. There is only one stage, and there are three paths to victory: Fill your hive with nectar, kill the other team's Queen three times, or ride a giant snail to glory. Naturally, Killer Queen has acquired a dedicated following, namely because only 23 copies exist in bars and arcades across the U.S. Brewcade is one of the lucky owners of a console, which has led to a league night and tournament days. Perhaps you simply can't understand the appeal until you and a few friends grab a round and actually get after it, but trust us — you'll want plenty of quarters on hand before you embark on your next obsession.

Best Burning Man Art In San Francisco

HYBOCOZO at Patricia's Green

It was a pretty special thing when a version of the Burning Man Temple by sculptor David Best was erected at Hayes Valley's Patricia's Green in 2015. That Burning Man razzle-dazzle is back, this time courtesy of Bay Area sculptors Yelena Filipchuk and Serge Beaulieu, whose collective goes by the name HYBOCOZO. The two gorgeous sculptures sitting in the park are called Trillian and Dodi, and both resemble enormous, oversize Dungeons & Dragons dice decorated with intricate, laser-cut patterned tiles. These creations become truly brilliant at night, when their internal, color-shifting lights fire up to illuminate the sculptures and project mind-blowing shadows on the surrounding sidewalks. The taller piece, Trillian, was created for this installation, while the smaller Dodi was at Burning Man in 2014 and 2015. Both these beauties are scheduled to remain in place until November.

Best Underage Singer Who's Achieved So Much, She Makes You Look Bad

Lilah Blue

Lilabluemusic.com

Before the age of 16, San Francisco singer Lila Blue had already composed music for the theater, recorded her debut album, Lucille, and learned how to play ukulele, guitar, piano, and bass. By the time she celebrated her Sweet Sixteen, Blue had released (and co-produced) another album, 2016's The Hollows Hold the Healing. Filled with plaintive ballads and twangy, acoustic tunes, the singer uses her soulful voice to narrate tales about heady topics like organized religion, sexual assault, and absent parents. And it's not like she has just one singing style, either: Her voice ranges from fluttery and breathy to thick and muscular.

Best Discovery from the Basement

We Care A Lot by Faith No More

fnm.com

In the early 1980s, Faith No More was a little-known punk-rock quartet playing late-night gigs at seedy S.F. clubs and recording music in garages their friends' parents owned. One day, while "just making noise," bassist Bill Gould says the band created its breakthrough hit, "We Care a Lot." They recorded it — but then they got famous, and the distribution deal for We Care a Lot ended in 1990. The EP was largely forgotten until 2015, when Gould found the masters in his basement. Out-of-print for more than 20 years, the lost album was re-released in 2016 by Koolarrow Records, featuring the original eight-track demos along with some live recordings from Faith No More's early stints at now-defunct clubs like The Ivy.

Most Cathartic Form of Resistance:

Satanic SF's "Presidential Roast"

Whether it's pushing against abortion restrictions by claiming they're against their religion or erecting statues of Baphomet next to unconstitutional 10 Commandments monuments, Satanists play a vital role in our public discourse. And after Trump's election, the act of burning the president in effigy feels even more cathartic than whacking a Donald Es Un Pendejo piñata. Resistance must take many forms, and a pentagram with Hair Furor bursting into flames at the center of it feels pretty good right about now.

Fiercest Local Rapper

Lil Yase

@LilYase600

Sunnydale rapper Lil Yase has a gravelly voice that downplays the violence and aggression in his synthy, boom-bap music. Born Mark Antonyyo Alexander, the lanky 22-year-old grew up playing basketball, but turned his sights toward music after graduating high school. In 2013, he started making music videos using a friend's iPad, but he didn't release any material online until 2015. Yase's tunes combine gangsta rap's toughness with the buoyancy of hyphy, and he spits over simple, synthesizer beats that are looped throughout the song. His lyrics tend to be boastful or dark, and in a new track about a female Uber driver, Yase repeats, "Don't make me have to shoot a bitch." But it's likely most listeners don't even know what Yase is saying. He mumbles so much it's hard to understand him.

Hybocozo

Best Song About the State of San Francisco Right Now

"Monochrome Dreams" by The Blue Hours

thebluehours.bandcamp.com

"There once was a way to stay / In the land of monochrome dreams," sings The Blue Hours' Theresa Calpotura in the S.F. duo's brooding new "Monochrome Dreams." Her vocals are interwoven with a sample of "Mambayu," a Filipino rice-pounding folk song, which lends a repetitive air to a song Calpotura describes as capturing "the idea of a monotonous work or routine." As San Francisco changes, it gets harder and harder for artists and musicians to make a living, no question, but "Monochrome Dreams" is also inspired by a Rimbaud poem about mutability. It's "a time of transition," Calpotura says, "much like what San Francisco is going through now."

Best Opportunity to Hear Heaps of Local Artists

Phono del Sol

Saturday, June 17, Potrero del Sol Park,
2827 Cesar Chavez St. $15-$60; phonodelsol.com

Since 2010, this one-day music-and-food festival has made a point to book as many local artists as possible. At last year's Phono del Sol, punk band The She's, indie-rockers Hot Flash Heat Wave, and the Mission rapper Adam Vida shared the bill — and this year, there are even bigger names to look forward to. John Dwyer's garage-rock band Thee Oh Sees will headline, and other Bay Area highlights include Jay Som, Duckwrth, Bells Atlas, Never Young, Madeline Kenney, Rayana Jay, and Tino Drima. Make sure you bring blankets and an inflatable air lounge, because you'll be catching these performances on sloping, grassy hills.

Best Music Video Set in S.F.

Down 2 Earth's "DNA"

Down 2 Earth is a rap crew out of Oakland that consists of three dudes who built separate careers in the East Bay hip-hop scene. There's a distinctively smooth, laid-back quality to their music, which harkens to early-'90s rap with its use of obscure jazz and soul samples and internal rhyme schemes. In the music video for "DNA," a rubbery track off their sophomore album Fair Share, we see the trio crossing the Bay Bridge in a gold 1970s Chevrolet to deliver pizzas for Veracio's, a spot in SoMa near a studio Down 2 Earth used to record in. En route, they encounter hot girls and creepy, partially naked guys, and East Bay rappers Jay Ant and Iamsu make cameos. The silly, bouncy-sounding beat meshes well with the dudes' playful, "idgaf" manner, and it's no big deal when one of the guys confesses that he ate a slice from a box.

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Best Mid-Show Catastrophe

Justin Martin's Stolen Thumb Drive

Around midnight on Friday, Jan. 20, at Dirtybird's quarterly party at Mezzanine, Justin Martin's USB drive was stolen. The DJ was about to start his set after a rousing hour-and-15-minute stint by his brother Christian when he discovered it was missing. Though he didn't make a public announcement about the theft, Martin later posted numerous tweets about it, even going so far as to offer a $1,000 reward. Fans rallied to his side, retweeting his posts and creating memes with threats for the thief. It worked, because in less than 24 hours, the culprit called Martin to confess the crime, returning the drive.

Best Local Feud

University High School vs. Lick-Wilmerding High School

A few weeks before a major, end-of-season basketball game at Oracle Arena between University and Lick-Wilmerding high schools, a University student named Ben Solomon released a music video on YouTube. Called "Devils' Anthem," it features shots of the ritzy, Pacific Heights school and banal lyrics about how "we bring a new type of charisma." It's hardly a diss track, but two days later, a group of students at Lick-Wilmerding who called themselves ISM released a video online called "Game Recognize Game." Staged in what could be the Ingleside school's auditorium, the video is a vicious attack on University High School. From the first verse, the entire student body gets dissed — "I just came to explain to ya'll what this game is worth / What ya'll know about work / You been eating out that silver spoon since you was birthed" — and specific people from the "Devils' Anthem" get mocked, too. ("I saw that little dab girl that wasn't cute.") Even Solomon's eyebrows get knocked: "Boy better wax those."

Best New Mural

"No Ceiling" by Believe in People

A large wall near Westfield Centre that faces Mission Street got a fresh coat of paint earlier this year from mural artist Believe in People (BiP). The five-story mural, a tribute to Bay Area women, is titled "No Ceiling," and while you have to get pretty close to see it, it's quite striking. Six-year-old Ja'Niyha W. from Oakland was the model, posed in a classic Rosie the Riveter stance, but with a huge bicep and an anchor tattoo. The piece took a month and 400 cans of spray paint to complete, and often stops tourists in their tracks.

Best Recurring Piece of Guerrilla Art

McAllister Installations

1269 McAllister St.

Every month for the past 15 years, artist Miguel Gutierrez-Ranzi has spent hours upon hours creating a large installation out of found objects and pieces of trash. Once a piece is completed, he uses a unique pulley system to hang the sculpture out of his second-story window on McAllister Street, for the whole neighborhood to admire. Spools of thread, old CDs, Barbie heads, plastic bottles, and credit cards are just some of the materials he's used, and many of the pieces have a holiday theme or political undertone. Fans are invited to offer feedback in the form of handwritten letters that can be deposited in a little orange mailbox on the fence.

Best New Place to See Local Art

The Growlery

235 Broderick St., thegrowlery.org

On residential Broderick Street, a big yellow mansion covered in flowering wisteria has been given a new life. Once the San Francisco Raffle Dream House, 235 Broderick is now home to The Growlery, an artist residency and exhibition space. A couple times a month, the doors open to the neighborhood to come see work created by artists living in the space — which can range from photography to large-scale installations. There's often beer and wine (on the house), and a live band or two, too.

Best Movie Theater Cell Phone Policy

Alamo Drafthouse

2550 Mission St, 415-549-5959 or drafthouse.com/sf

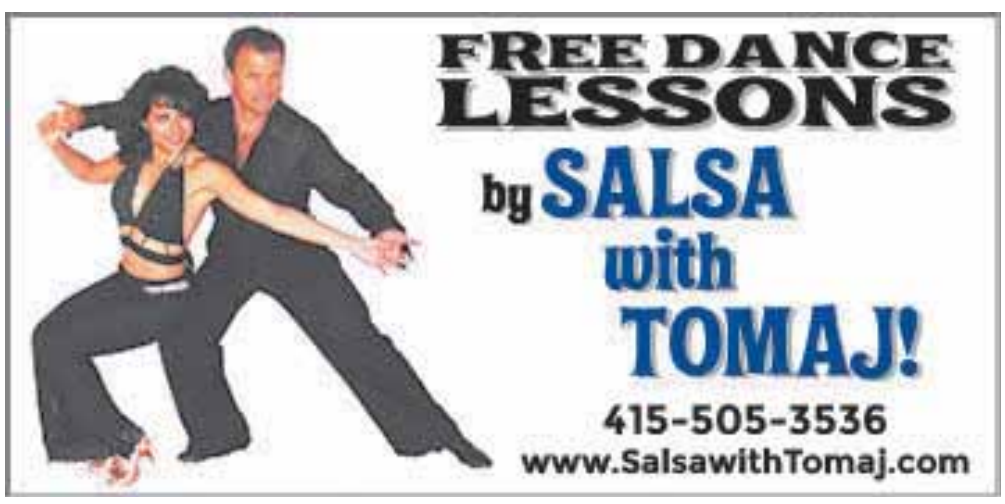
There is a lot to like about the Alamo Drafthouse, San Francisco's newest movie theater: reserved seats, delicious food delivered right to you, a full bar, and no commercials played before the film. However, there may be no better facet than Alamo's "no talking" policy. Before each film, a PSA — sometimes featuring actors from the movie you are about to watch — lets the audience know what horrible things will befall them if they talk or text. While there may be some hyperbole employed there, the policy does stipulate that after one warning, any offenders will be booted from the premises without a refund (ditto those who arrive late). If you take film seriously, so does the Drafthouse. Cinematic peace and quiet await you.

Best Real Life Version of Etsy

Renegade Craft Fair

July 15-16 at Fort Mason, renegadecraftfair.com

One of the (many) problems with the online craft conglomerate Etsy is that you can't actually examine any of the many wares for sale. Sure, that lavender soap carved to resemble Ross from *Friends* looks awesome, but how can you really know until you smell it for yourself? Enter the Renegade Craft Fair, held at Fort Mason Center's Festival Pavilion three times a year. Featuring many of your favorite Etsy vendors, Renegade is a hipster bazaar of hand-sewn trinkets, organic blend designs, and all the enamel pins you could ever wear. We jest: Renegade offers a chance to meet the people behind the storefronts, and stock up on birthday and holiday presents in one fell swoop. Just don't bring a credit card you aren't ready to swipe with abandon.



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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Best New San Francisco Unicorn

The Mogamin Car

You're walking down Mission Street and then you see it: a 1991 Honda Accord decked out as the ultimate pop-up video game stand. Run by 34-year-old San Franciscan Maurice Ford ("Mo"), the Mogamin Car is decked out with televisions connected to classic consoles like Nintendo 64, Sega Genesis, and Super Nintendo. The Mogamin Car can be found at intersections like 16th and Valencia, 19th and Mission, and Castro and Market, twice a week. The games, including favorites like Super Smash Brothers and Donkey Kong Country, are free to play, with tips graciously accepted. Next time you hit Pancho Villa for a late-night burrito, maybe you too will be graced with a holy vision of the Mogamin Car.

Best Tourist Attraction for Locals

Alcatraz Night Tour

alcatrazcruises.com

Rule no. 1 of being local is to avoid the tourist traps. That means no strolls down Fisherman's Wharf, no selfies at Coit Tower, and no cable-car rides. Many folks understandably lump Alcatraz — the island that once housed the worst criminals in the country — into this category too, but the truth is that the Rock is far more than a spooky photo-op. If you've never taken a ferry over to Alcatraz, which also has a history as a military prison and a site of Native American protest, the best way to experience it is via the Alcatraz Cruises Night Tour, which offers the added eeriness of exploring the island in the dark. Spots are limited, but it's well worth the effort to check your pride and pay a visit to the Big House by moonlight.

Best Local Music Podcast

Noise Pop Podcast

noisepop.com/podcast

San Francisco's music scene is most definitely alive and well, but trying to figure out which bands to check out can be quite a colossal task. Thankfully, the Noise Pop podcast is here to set listeners straight on all the latest bands — local and beyond — that need to be in your ears. Noise Pop is one of the city's most cherished local music promoters, and its podcast carries forward the spirit they've long brought to the live shows and festivals they've supported. Hosted by local music journalist Adrian Spinelli, episodes often feature insightful interviews and live performances with acts like Diet Cig and Thao Nguyen. Spinelli also brings his latest favorite tracks to the studio, meaning your Spotify playlists will never run out of new tunes.

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Shostakovich with Matthias Goerne & Tchaikovsky's Fifth

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THU **MAY 25** 8PM
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Manfred Honeck conductor
Matthias Goerne baritone
San Francisco Symphony

Shostakovich Suite on Verses of Michelangelo Buonarroti
Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 5

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Best Place to Drink Before a Fillmore Concert
The Social Study
1795 Geary Blvd., 415-292-7417 or thesocialstudysf.com
The days of acid tests are over, which means the best you'll find by way of libations at the iconic Fillmore is a $14 plastic cup of beer. If drinking before a concert is on the schedule, your best bet is to head a block down Geary and enjoy the cozy confines of The Social Study. There's no hard liquor, but the bar has a lovely selection of draft beers and truly phenomenal sangria available. Wine drinkers will be well-covered, too. Arrive early to play one of the many board games stashed throughout the premises, and for the peckish, a menu of treats like Cuban sliders, potato bruschetta, and marinated olives await.

Best Way to Time Travel Back to the 1920s
Speakeasy SF
501 Jones St., 415-891-9744 or thespeakeasysf.com
Below a fairly non-descript North Beach street, there is a secret world of casinos, stiff drinks, and crooked dealings. The Speakeasy SF is an immersive experience set in the 1920s, where patrons mingle with a sizeable cast on a choose-your-own-adventure of sorts. Attendees are invited to move between the bar, casino, and cabaret as they see fit, and while the actors tend not to interact with the audience, you may be offered a sip of a flask or taught the can-can. Yes, the casino chips are fake, but the drinks are as real as President Warren G. Harding's eyebrows. Speakeasy SF is unlike anything else in the city, and a great way to escape the grind of real life for a few colorful hours.

Best Local Strain
Flow Kana
Gone are the days of smoking only whatever that dude from the movie theater has in his jacket. We now have a surplus of options when it comes to everyone's favorite flower. Hailing from the Emerald Triangle of Mendocino and Humboldt counties, Flow Kana represents a collective of small farmers who put organic growing methods, quality care, and superior products first. From the low-THC, high-CBD blend Luck of New York to the heavier high and delectable flavor of Ogre Berry Kush, the brands distributed by Flow Kana continually impress. Available directly from their site or at nearby dispensaries like Grass Roots, Lux Collective, and Mission Organic, local cannabis consumers can keep the good times rolling with ease.

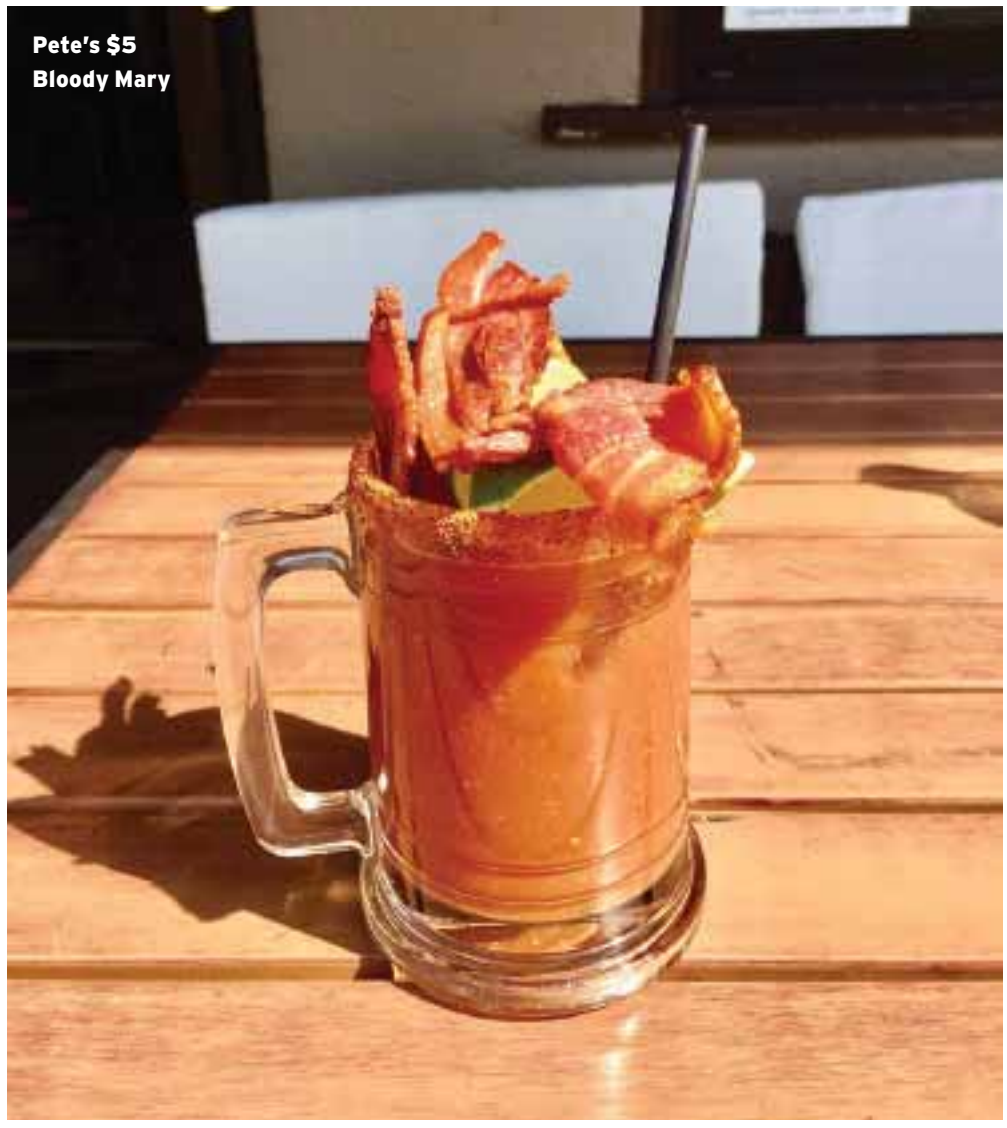
Best Undercover Giant Pregame Spot
3rd Street Grill
695 Third St., 415-538-0804 or 3rdstreetgrill.com
Going to watch a Giants game at the park usually entails a few drinks or even a meal before first pitch. But finding a place where you can actually sit down near AT&T Park — let alone order — is becoming a tougher order than expecting the bullpen to hold a late-game lead. Thankfully 3rd Street Grill is a hidden gem in a sea of trendy bars. Often full of open tables on game night, this spot is two blocks from the diamond and a great way to take down a pitcher or two before cheering on the orange and black. They also have burgers, chicken wings, salads, and more, but be warned. The proprietor has a delightful habit of insisting you order the special.

Best Niche Trivia
'90s Simpsons at the Knockout
3223 Mission St., 415-550-6994 or theknockoutsf.com
Every fourth Sunday at the Knockout, a battle of epically nerdy proportions is waged. However, this war doesn't feature 20-sided die or Magic cards, but Ned Flanders and the Kwik-E-Mart. *Simpsons* trivia at the Knockout features Duff beer on tap, three classic episodes screened between rounds, and some of the most specific, insanely difficult questions known to man. Based only on show's Golden Age — seasons that aired in the 1990s — the point of *Simpsons* trivia isn't so much to win but to endure. Keep a look out for one heroic individual who comes dressed as a different character and has, by most accounts, taken first place almost every time. We must beat him! It's what Bleeding Gums Murphy would want.

Best $5 Bloody Mary
Pete's On Green
570 Green St., 415-398-2551 or petestavernsf.com
Sorry Zeitgeist — it's time to step down. The best Bloody Mary in San Francisco now goes to Pete's on Green in North Beach. The spicy-but-not-that-spicy Bloody Mary is a breakfast unto itself, coming larded up with two strips of bacon, onion rings, pickled veggies, and lime. And it's only $5 on the weekends. As one might guess, it's pretty boozy, which is always nice, and Pete's cushioned outdoor seating doesn't hurt, either.

Best Pool Party Where You Can't Swim
Phoenix
601 Eddy St., 415-776-1380 or jdvhotels.com
Don't let the name fool you: The "Skinny Dip" party at the Phoenix Hotel is not, in fact, a pool party. It's more like a dance party *around* a pool, because, guess what? Only hotel guests are allowed to swim in it. (And don't even try jumping in. Security guards patrol the perimeter.) It helps that the event attracts big-name acts like Toro y Moi, Shiba San, and The Magician, and it's nice to catch them somewhere other than a nightclub. Still, who wouldn't want to jump in a pool after getting sweaty on the dance floor?

Best Boozy Slushie
Piña Colada, El Techo de Lolinda
2516 Mission St., 415-550-6970 or eltechosf.com
Blender drinks are perfectly acceptable if they're served with with little cocktail umbrellas and a bizarrely shaped glass, and that's just how they do it at the Mission District rooftop bar of El Techo de Lolinda. Piña Coladas get a pretty bad rap, but that's because they're usually made with a mix instead of genuine coconut cream. El Techo uses the good stuff, and also a blend of three premium rums. But the presentation of El Techo's piña colada is what makes it a visual party, and it comes in a glass as big as those tacky margarita glasses tourists walk around with in Vegas.


Pete's $5 Bloody Mary
Photo by Eric Pratt

Best Bar Up For Sale on Craigslist
Noc Noc on Broadway
515 Broadway, 415-994-2806 or nocnocs.com
Psst — wanna buy a bar on Craigslist? That opportunity exists, as the North Beach location of the bar Noc Noc is listed for sale. The deal, as offered, will set you back $129,000 (with a two-year lease of nearly five grand a month, plus a four-year option remaining). This space doesn't have the same lovably bizarre sculpted tables and seating as the Lower Haight Noc Noc, but the two-year-old North Beach location does come with some pretty cool art and — more importantly — a Type 41 California ABC liquor license. If you've ever dreamed of owning your own San Francisco bar, this is your chance to Noc Noc it out of the park.

Classiest Place to Drink Champagne With Mom
The Riddler
528 Laguna St., 415-741-1729 or riddlersf.com
Named for a method of getting cloudy sediment to come together for easy removal from the bottle, Hayes Valley's smallish but extremely convivial women-run Champagne bar is the ideal place for blowing off steam after work in a very classy fashion: with a shot and a bump. (That would be bubbles and caviar.) But The Riddler is also mom-friendly, in the best possible way. She gave birth to you, she deserves the best, and that comes in the form of tater tot waffles, sparkling rose, and a "Joan," a glass of house wine filled to the brim. Lova ya, ma.

Best Beer Alternative at a Bar
Kombucha at Thee Parkside
1600 17th St., 415-252-1330 or theeparkside.com
When something sells out, you know it's gotta be good. That's the case with Boochcraft's kombuchas, which Thee Parkside has been serving on tap for the last few months. At seven percent ABV, they pack about the same punch as a beer but taste a lot sweeter and bubblier. For $7, you can get a tall glass filled to the brim with either ginger lime or grapefruit hibiscus. Tap beers mostly go for $6, so for a $1 more, are you really going to opt for the same ol' ale when you can give your taste buds a jolt?

Best Place to Feel Like You're in *Tron*
Coin-Op Game Room
508 Fourth St., 628-444-3277 or coinopsf.com
The sign on the second floor at Coin-Op Game Room reads "Flynn's." It's not a watering hole for disgraced national security advisers but a reference to '80s cult-classic *Tron*, and the upstairs bar is indeed a pure homage to some Jeff Bridges sci-fi weirdness. You can play Q-Bert, Galaga, and *Walking Dead* pinball, then get some wood-fired pizzas downstairs. Thumb through the menu, designed to look like a 1950s pulp novel about tales

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from outer space, while drinking a Konami Code (house-spiced tequila, mezcal, amaretto, lime, and agave). Best of all, Coin-Op swaps out its arcade games every month.

Best Place for Mezcal
Mezcalito
2323 Polk St., 415-441-2323 or mezcalitosf.com

Four dozen varieties of mezcal greet you as you walk into this Russian Hill establishment, which might be a Oaxacan restaurant with a killer drink list or else a mezcal bar with a great food menu. Either way, the hamachi ceviche and fish tacos are the ideal accompaniment to a happy hour spent sipping your way through the liquor of the *agave espadin*. For cocktails, there's a mezcal Negroni and a mezcal Vieux Carre, but we're partial to the maracuya sour (Siete Misterios mezcal, passionfruit, vanilla agave, lime, egg whites, and Peychauds bitters). Trust.

Best Tiki Bar
Pagan Idol
375 Bush St., 415-985-6375 or paganidol.com

The tiki revival is more than welcome, and it's not just because in lieu of coffee in the office kitchen, the *SF Weekly* staff starts every day with a team-building exercise in the form of a volcano bowl. Building off immutable classics like Tonga Room or Forbidden Island, Future Bars' Pagan Idol squeezes the seven seas like a lemon wedge, creating ridiculously great (and just plain ridiculous) drinks full of fire, flowers, and falernum. Book a tiki hut for four, or just elbow up next to the moai on a bar stool for a Daybreaker or a Planters Punch. Pele demands tribute!

Best Art Bar (Whatever That Means)
Bar Fluxus
18 Harlan Place, 415-760-4713 or barfluxus.com

From the Dadaists to the absinthe-soaked bohemians of the late 19th-century, the connection between a good drink and the avant-garde is eternal. The concept of an "art bar" seems ripe for parody, but Bar Fluxus (in the Hotel des Arts) in Union Square has a calendar that's too packed with salsa, comedy, karaoke, and Planned Parenthood fundraisers to accrue even a single eye-roll. The interior is an homage to Yoko Ono, John Cage, and Marcel Duchamp, and the cocktails — like an herbaceous Devil's Lettuce made with gin, fennel, hops, and tonic — are even more serious-playful.

Best Bar-Within-a-Bar
Over Proof
3174 16th St., 415-400-4748 or overproofsf.com

ABV, 16th Street's preeminent cocktail spot, took some unused space upstairs in the rear and turned it into something meant to rival Trick Dog's ever-mutating menu: bar-within-a-bar Over Proof, which serves four food-accompanied drinks for a set price. It began over the winter with the rum-centric Flip-Flop and has since shifted to whiskey with Double Back ($60, open through July 28). There will be two further versions until the winter, when the entire underlying concept changes. But for now, there are rifles and skins on the wall, two seatings a night, and a high-energy vibe intent on impressing patrons with Over Proof's mixological prowess.

Best S.F. Beer Tour
Vantigo
415-484-5240 or vantigosf.com

Remember that bus tour of Rome where the bored emcee mumbled something into the mic about the Spanish Steps and you fell asleep? Vantigo is the total opposite of that. A charter service that drives you around the Bay Area in a VW microbus, Vantigo's red 1971 workhorse Lillie takes you up to Wine Country or down Highway 1, but the joys of riding around San Francisco breweries led by a knowledgeable docent are unbeatable. You get a three-and-a-half-hour tour to at least three breweries — like Cellarmaker, Harmonic, or Magnolia — at least one of which involves a facility tour, plus snacks and water for the ride.

Most Deservedly Over-Awarded Bar
Trick Dog
3010 20th St., 415-471-2999 or trickdogbar.com

Trick Dog is becoming the Andy Warhol of bars. It's almost like, could you please stop winning so many accolades for a second? Because there are other worthy contenders in the shadows here. At the same time, nine menus deep into its ever-shifting cocktail excellence — this iteration is all about Mission muralists, with drinks named for Sam Flores, Jeremy Fish, Mel Waters, Sirron Norris, and others — nothing about Trick Dog suggests it's coasting or resting on its laurels. This dog deserves all the treats.

Best Nightlife Spot That Stayed Alive
The Stud
399 Ninth St., 415-863-6623 or studsf.com

In spite of being open since the 1960s and standing in the same spot since the 1987, SoMa gay bar The Stud looked like it was destined for closure after the rent tripled last summer. Then a collective of 18 queer nightlife folks bought it, renegotiated a two-year lease, and breathed new life into the programming while running it as the first co-operative club in the U.S. It had always been a welcoming spot for drag queens, leatherfolk, and weirdos — but now it's open seven nights a week, with parties and shows for every subculture in the LGBTQ spectrum, from punk-art night Desperate Living to drag extravaganza Vivvy's Grand Opening to dance party Towne & Country. Stay studly, San Francisco.

Best Dog-Friendly Bar
Emperor Norton's Boozeland
510 Larkin St., 415-926-8118, no website

It's not just a lack of "No Dogs Allowed" signs on a bar's door that make it dog-friendly. The staff, the atmosphere, and the company. Emperor Norton's Boozeland checks off all of those and more: The music isn't overwhelming, there's a back patio for lounging in the sunshine, the bartenders don't get bitchy if people ask for a cup of water for their dog, and there's always another pooch in the bar to say hi to (often sitting on a barstool of their very own). Molotov's was a close second, but let's be honest, not every pup likes metal.

Best Venue for Seeing a Broad Array of Acts in One Week
The Fillmore
1805 Geary Blvd., 415-346-6000 or thefillmore.com

The Fillmore has been around since 1912, served a number of purposes before becoming promoter Bill Graham's launching pad. There, he hosted wild rock 'n' roll concerts for the Who, the Grateful Dead, Nico, and the Doors. Shows at the Fillmore have since mellowed out — bye-bye, strobe lights and offstage dancers — and the array of acts that play there has become more eclectic. On any given week, you'll find an assortment of pop, rock, indie, electronic, and even hip-hop artists playing. D.C. rapper Wale recently played a show 24 hours after singer-songwriter Aimee Mann took the stage, and it's not unusual to see throwback bands like Squirrel Nut Zippers and Simple Plan wedged between diametrically different acts on the calendar, like punk-rock band Bleached or British classical-crossover trio Clean Bandit.

Best Way to Get High Without Smoking Weed
Mellows
Available at The Apothecarium, SPARC, and Harvest Dispensary. $3-$40; getmellows.com

It's almost hard to believe that these decadent, made-by-hand marshmallows have weed in them, because you seriously can't taste it. Made with single-origin Red Congolese sativa, each marshmallow contains 5 milligrams of THC, and come by the dozen. But it's not the low dosage that makes the mellows so delicious (and seemingly innocent). It's the goodies sprinkled on top. Mellows come in a multitude of flavors, like birthday cake, S'mores, Orange Dreamsicle, and raspberry rose lychee, each with its own special toppings. Chunks of pretzels are embedded in the peanut butter pretzel ones and the strawberry shortcake is smothered in cake crumbs and dried strawberries. If you have a hard time making up your mind, opt for an assorted box of six.

Best Club-Inside-a-Club
The Loft at Public Works
161 Erie St., 415-496-6738 or publicsf.com

If you've never realized that there's a second bar and dance floor at Public Works called the Loft, you're not alone, because it's hidden upstairs around a corner. Being hard to find actually works in the Loft's favor, as there's generally elbow room on the dance floor, and you never have to wait long to get a drink. A two-story, built-in structure that's sort of like a kid's clubhouse — or treehouse sans tree — has nooks and crannies to sit in, with great views of the dance floor. The lighting is soft and yellow, and films are occasionally projected onto screens on two of the walls. There's also a wooden barricade of sorts that splits the room in two, great for shy people who want something to hide behind while dancing.

Best Place to Dress Up Like a Dinosaur (Or Zookeeper)
Dirtybird BBQ
Sunday, June 4, noon to 8 p.m., on Treasure Island. $19.50-$40; dirtybirdrecords.com/bbq

If you want to let your freak flag fly, do it at Dirtybird BBQ. The annual event, put on by the San Francisco tech-house label of the same name, is your chance to don a wizard cape, dress up like a cheeseburger, or wear that sexy see-through

Fort Mason Center for Arts & Culture and the Eyes and Ears Foundation present: San Francisco International Arts Festival

In the Dark Times, will there also be Singing?

Featuring: ABADÁ Capoeira, Abhinaya Dance Company, AguaClara Flamenco, Alma Esperanza Cunningham Movement, Alyce Finwall Dance Theater, Alyssa Mitchel, The Amber, Amy Lewis / Push Up Something Hidden, Ancient Future, Aswan Dancers with the Caravan Band and Joweh Dance Troupe, Bay Area Dance Collective, Brenda Wong Aoki with Shoko Hikage, Brian Copeland, burnsWork, Chlo & Co Dance, Compagnie Tabea Martin, Edward Schocker's Crossing Ensemble, Elke Calvert, Embark Gallery, Erica Essner Performance Co-Op, Eve Mutso, Fanfare Zambaleta, Gamelan Sekar Jaya with Larry Reed's ShadowLight, Gautam Tejas Ganeshan, Global Guitar Summit, Gu Jiani, GuGu Drum Group, JJBro, Joe Landini, KaDao Yin, Latin Rhythm Boys, LEVYdance, Mariah Parker Indo Latin Chamber Jazz Sextet, Marika Brussel, Melody of China with Swapan Chaudhuri, Itoro Udofia, Meyerhold Theatre Center, MO'FONE, Moe! Staiano Ensemble, Museum of Performance & Design, Myriam Gourfink & Kasper Toeplitz, Nancy Wang of Eth-Noh-Tec, Niloufar Talebi, Pablo Estigarribia, punkkiCo/Roadmap10, Richard Marriott with I Made Subandi, The Riley Project, Rotimi Agbabiaka, SAFEHOUSE for the Arts, Sarah Bush Dance Project, Scarabe, Shaping San Francisco, Sharman Duran Trio, Shih Yang Lee, STEAMROLLER Dance Company, Tango Con*Fusion, Trio Balkan Strings, ViBO Simfani, Victor Fung Dance, Vishwa Shanthi Performing Arts, Voodoo Cabaret World Music and Yaelisa & Caminos Flamencos.

BARS & CLUBS

Grass Roots

Courtesy of Grass Roots

dress you have no idea why you bought. Anything goes, and you'll definitely get at least one high-five from a stranger, because the crowd is *that* friendly. Come hungry for barbecue by Dirtybird's master chef Grillson, and play a few carnival games like "Hit the Milk Jugs with the Balls."

Best Dispensary For Feeling Like You're in *Westworld*

Grass Roots

1077 Post St., 415-346-4338 or grassrootssf.com

The interior design in dispensaries is often drab, clinical, and — more often than not — bathed in white. Not so with Grass Roots. With its grandiose mahogany counter, tufted red leather chairs, antique hanging light fixtures, and ornate, patterned wallpapers, it looks more like a Wild West saloon or a set from HBO' sci-fi series. The lavish decor even extends to the inventory, which, instead of being listed on a chalkboard or large TV screen, is compiled into large, red-leather-bound menus as if you were ordering dinner at a fancy Italian restaurant.

Best Local Edible Company

IncrediMeds

Available at The Green Cross, 4218 Mission St., 415-648-4420 or incredimeds.myshopify.com

Since 2004, San Francisco cannabis confectionary IncrediMeds has served delectable, if not outright irresistible, edibles to the masses. Available exclusively at The Green Cross, the city's first legal dispensary, IncrediMeds offers a range of products that go beyond mere chocolate bars and gummy candies (although they sell those, too). Cookie snobs will have a conniption fit choosing a flavor — strawberry white chocolate or Reese's Pieces? — and those partial to savory treats can snack on the garlic rye chips. Vegans and gluten-free eaters can also find stuff to eat, choosing from olive oil, honey, and various teas.

Best Vape Pen That Won't Break Within a Month

Gold Drop

[golddropco.com]

It's a dirty little secret of vape pens that many are poorly constructed and start breaking down within weeks of their purchase. One of the most reliable, compact, affordable pen units this stoner has found comes from the Cannabis Cup-winning Gold Drop. This thin, lightweight baby has an exceedingly simple design that's great for beginners and has adjustable voltage. The charger is one of those discreet USB units that plugs right into a computer, so your boss is none the wiser when you're powering up for that after-work puff. Its disposable cartridges are sold separately, but there's space for them in the sleek, wallet-size carrying case in which your Gold Drop pen is sold.

Best Weed Ad on Muni Buses

Urban Pharm

122 10th St., 415-872-9488 or urbanpharm.com

You know you're in San Francisco when you see Muni buses with images of big ol' kind buds plastered on the side. Most local billboard operators like Clear Channel still refuse to run cannabis advertising, and California laws for advertising the sticky-icky remain fairly strict. But the SFMTA has made the call to allow marijuana ads, with occasionally hilarious results. In and of themselves, Muni ads for SoMa dispensary Urban Pharm are all that funny. But the sight of gigantic buds on a city-owned public transit vehicle, accompanied with phrases like "I (Heart) Dab Bar!" and "MASSIVE Concentrate Selection" gives one the giggles even without the benefit of hitting the water pipe.

Best New Bar
Best Cocktail
Best Cocktail Bar

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For a full schedule, visit:
www.barfluxus.com/calendar

Photography by Deb Leal

Best New Edible
Organicares Hazelnug Spread
organicaresca.org/spreadables

You've heard of cannabis edibles, but make way for cannabis "spreadables." This delicious, Nutella-like goop is made from a hash-oil hybrid and pairs perfectly with bread, bananas, a spoon, or just your finger. Available in full-size, one-cup canisters or smaller quarter-cup servings, the hazelnut-and-cocoa combo will have a special place on the roof of your mouth. And if your prefer the savory edibles to the sweet, the San Jose-based Organicares also makes a cannabis-infused BBQ Chex Mix.

Best New Drinkable
Somatik Cannabis Coffee
somatik.us

Coffee drinkers can achieve a new kind of high with a bottled-cannabis beverage that showed up on Bay Area dispensary shelves this year. Your two favorite addictions are brewed together in Somatik Medical Cannabis–Infused Cold Brew, a high-octane caffeinated drink made with one of San Francisco's favorite artisan coffee roasters, Ritual. Somatik is sold at dispensaries and via delivery from CANNVIS. One eight-ounce bottle of Somatik is infused with 15 milligrams of THC, adequate for a full morning or afternoon of buzz even those of us who "medicate" daily.

Best Homer Simpson-Looking Edible
Strictly Edibles Birthday Cake Donuts
strictlyediblescollective.com

Hilariously mimicking the exact appearance of the doughnuts Homer Simpson eats on The Simpsons, Strictly Edibles Birthday Cake Donuts create a cartoon reality in more ways than one. Sold in packs of three, each has an impressive 100 milligrams of THC. So you can down one for a perfectly fine high, or put away all three and go for the full-on doughnut daze. They're made with coconut oil, which not only neutralizes the danky cannabis taste but also speeds up the THC effect. And with a spot-on Homer Simpson look, they're more like d'oh-nuts, amirite?

Best Adorable Marijuana-Leaf Party Decoration
Papel Picado from Canna Reign Studios
cannareignstudios.com

If you're not familiar with the term, papeles picados are decorative, tissue-paper cut-outs seen in Mexican folk art, particularly around Day of the Dead. Local crafters Canna Reign studios have done marijuana-leaf versions of papel picado, and they are just the damned cutest party favors you can string up. Canna Reign's papel picado come in oodles of different designs, a couple of which say the word "cannabis" for anyone who needs to be reminded what that ubiquitous leaf really is. The intricate artistry of these gorgeous banners is dazzling, and the string is made of "high"-quality cotton baker's twine, so the decorations can be reused for numerous marijuana-themed parties and events.

Best Infused Salad Dressing
Forbidden Valley Ranch
flourishcannabis.com

You'll definitely want to eat your vegetables when they're coated with Flourish Edibles' Forbidden Valley Ranch dressing. And unlike the crappy, mass-market salad dressing which it parodies, Forbidden Valley Ranch is a great gourmet dressing made with all-natural ingredients. After tracking it down at various Bay Area dispensaries, the veggie tray will be the first thing that disappears the next time you're entertaining.

Best Cannabis Solution for Menstrual Cramps
Whoopi & Maya's Medical Cannabis Rub
omedibles.org

Yes, the "Whoopi" in Whoopi & Maya is Academy Award-winning actress and daytime talk show host Whoopi Goldberg, and her latest venture is a relief for anyone whooped with menstrual pain or cramping. A partnership with San Francisco's all-female cannabis company Om Edibles, Whoopi & Maya offers a range of topicals and edibles all suited toward treating period-related discomfort. In addition to the topical ointment, Whoopi & Maya also offers cannabis tinctures, edibles, and bath salts designed for menstrual relief. You can't always get high all day when the monthlies arrive, but this ointment from Whoopi can cushion the edge.

Best Dispensary Where You Can Use a Credit or Debit Card
Medithrive
1933 Mission St., 415-562-6334 or medithrive.com

Kiva's Blueberry Terra Bites

One of the seedier aspects of the local marijuana industry is that every transaction has to be cash-only, no matter how classy the dispensary. But Visa, MasterCard, and some banks are beginning to relax these rules, and a handful of dispensaries now take plastic. In addition to the refined, high-end interior and design reminiscent of a futuristic Stanley Kubrick movie, Medithrive's Mission Street location is also a place where you can also bust out that platinum rewards card. And there's surely no better way to build up credit-card rewards and airline miles than by buying weed.

Best Dispensary to Linger At
Sparc
1256 Mission St., 415-252-7727 or sparcsf.com

There was a time when the goal of visiting a cannabis dispensary was to get in and get out as quickly as possible without being spotted by any of your co-workers. Things have changed, and dispensaries like Sparc are setting the bar, well, pretty high. At Sparc's lounge, patrons can enjoy complimentary use of Volcano vaporizers, as well as an events calendar that features things like a drag night called Dab Queens. There are frequently free samples and presentations from quality vendors like hmbldt. If you have a prickly roommate or you just can't wait to get home before trying your new purchase, it's hard to beat the vibes at Sparc.

Best Spot to Watch a Concert
Upstairs, at the Independent
628 Divisadero St., 415-771-1421 or theindependentsf.com

While there may be much debate over which venue in San Francisco is the best place to catch a show, the upstairs section of the Independent is as good as it gets. Given the intimate nature of the Independent, the upstairs view offers an unparalleled view from what amounts to a small balcony that extends towards the left side of the stage. How does one get up that mythical set of stairs at the venue's rear? The answer isn't entirely clear, but dedicated music fans can surely crack the code and enjoy their next Independent show from the secluded confines of its upper floor.

Best Local Edible
Kiva's Blueberry Terra Bites
kivaconfections.com

If you've ever had a case of the Mondays, you'll want to make sure you have a tin of Kiva's Blueberry Terra Bites close by. This local edible company has been noted for the elegance of its THC-infused snacks. A fan favorite, Kiva's Terra Bites are chocolate-covered blueberries packed with precisely 5 mg of THC, offering a delectable bite that is equal parts medicine and deliciousness. For the cannabis connoisseur on the go or anyone eager to dose while still keeping a low-profile, Kiva's Blueberry Terra Bites fit the bill as an essential addition to any stoner's pocket.

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BEST NEW RESTAURANT
TAWLA S.F.

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LITTLE STAR PIZZA

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Best Use of an Old Navy Basement

Trader Joe's

10 Fourth St., 415-536-7801 or traderjoes.com

You'd be forgiven for not even realizing that the Old Navy store at Fourth and Market Streets once had a basement. That space has sat empty for the last few years, but the February opening of a downtown Trader Joe's signals a new era for lovers of Three Buck Chuck, Triple Ginger Snaps, and cookie butter. The drawback, of course, is the lack of a dedicated parking lot in this particular location. But the proximity to the Powell Street BART station and several Muni lines make this TJ's easily accessible to any San Franciscan, and a heck of a lot more useful than 15,000 square feet of second-rate Gap apparel.

Best Trashy Food

The Ringmaster Donut Cheeseburger at Straw

203 Octavia Blvd., 415-431-3663 or strawsf.com

Bestill my heart (attack), the inspired culinary maniacs at Hayes Valley's carnival-themed Straw restaurant serve a cheeseburger that uses two glazed donuts in place of the buns. They call it The Ringmaster, and this high-calorie delight is every bit as delicious as it is bizarre. The burger patties are Golden Gate Meat Company certified-organic beef, as if that matters to someone eating a glazed donut cheeseburger. Life is short, but you can make it even shorter by adding a fried egg

Trader Joe's

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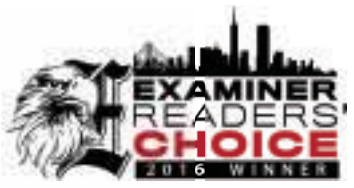

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(for an additional $1.50) or making it a double burger (for an extra $3.50).

Best New Super-Upscale Ice Cream

Salt & Straw

2201 Fillmore St., 415-829-2803 or saltandstraw.com

A Portland import by way of Los Angeles, Salt & Straw immediately joined Bi-Rite Creamery, Humphry Slocombe, and Mr. & Mrs. Miscellaneous as a major player in San Francisco's artisanal ice cream scene. The Pac Heights shop upcycles spent foodstuffs for its specific-to-S.F. menu, including old popcorn from the Roxie Theatre for "Roxie Road." But if you want (relatively) normal flavors, there's always rhubarb crumble with toast anise or a sorbet made with raspberry liqueur and edible flower.

Best New Bakery

Frena

132 Sixth St., 628-444-3666 or frenabakery.com

How many kosher bakeries does San Francisco have? Not many. Frena, which opened last fall as Taboon, is unique for boasting a stone oven on Sixth Street, where bakeries of any kind are scarce. More bread-y than full of pastries, Frena has sambusak (basically artisanal Hot Pockets), bagels, and the Israeli jelly doughnuts known as sufganiya. There are monster couscous salads for the carb-averse, too. Just be warned: Owing to the Sabbath, Frena closes early Fridays and doesn't reopen until Sunday.

Best Ambiguously Defined Mediterranean Restaurant

Tawla

206 Valencia St., 415-814-2704 or tawlasf.com

What's the only thing that could make California cuisine better than it already is? A stronger relationship with the sea. Combining Greece, Turkey, Lebanon, and the distinctly non-Atlantic-adjacent Iran into one superior regional fusion experience, Tawla takes two of the world's Mediterranean regions and combines them seamlessly. Whether it's the halibut molokhia (with mallow leaves, fermented chile, coriander, and fumet) or the minty lamb tartare known as kibbeh niyyeh, Tawla is effortlessly fresh.

Best New Place to Improve S.F.'s Reputation for Bad Pizza

Fiorella

2339 Clement St., 415-340-3049 or fiorella-sf.com

There are cracks appearing in this edifice, but San Francisco still has a reputation for middling pizza. While we're 100 percent on board with Tony Gemignani's empire of elaborate pies, it's Richmond restaurant Fiorella's integration of great pizza with an otherwise excellent Italian menu — cacio e pepe, nettle arancini — that wins our hearts. Go for the burrata, slathered in fresh basil, or the salciccia, fired with house-made sausage, fennel, provolone picante, fior di latte, oregano, and onion.

Best Place to Pretend You're in San Sebastian

Bellota

888 Brannan St., 415-430-6580 or bellotasf.com

A tapas restaurant underneath Airbnb headquarters that's also a hamhock-filled seafood spot, Bellota is among the few ambitious projects from the past two years to have not merely survived by thrived. In a dining room frequently filled with live Spanish guitar, you can dive into incredible paellas and a stew from the hearth called a fabada (Asturian white beans, chorizo, morcilla, pork belly, grilled octopus, and charred and fermented cabbage). In San Sebastian, people do nothing but eat. Here, you can live like them.

Best Exemplar of the Seven Seas

'Aina

900 22nd St., 415-814-3815 or ainasf.com

With all due respect to the incredible Liholiho Yacht Club, a new contender emerged on the scene last year that did wonders for Hawaiian food. Strictly speaking, 'Aina merely made the move from Bernal Heights pop-up to Dogpatch brick-and-mortar, but Jordan Keao's menu of loco moco, charred octopus luau with vadouvan peanuts,

Smoked hon shimeji and king oyster mushrooms at 'Aina.

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and shoyu-cured pipikaula (thin-sliced beef that's marinated a one week and then dry-aged for another) is responsible for causing long lines even on rainy weekend mornings. The national food press is coming, believe us.

Best New Indian Restaurant
Rooh
333 Brannan St., 415-525-4174 or roohsf.com

A trio of high-profile contemporary Indian restaurants hit San Francisco over the past several months: August 1 Five, Babu Ji, and Rooh. All are quite excellent — and very different from one another. Rooh is the most culinarily adventurous of the bunch, serving breads like mint chili lachha paratha alongside tuna bhel with tamarind gel and puffed black rice and a "non-vegetarian tasting menu" consisting of five bowls of butter chicken, vegetable curry, dal, saffron rice, and an outstanding avocado raita around a smaller bowl of chutney. Woo-hoo, Rooh.

Best New Brewpub
Almanac Taproom
2704 24th St, 415-932-6531 or almanacbeer.com

Seven years after its founding, Jesse Friedman's Almanac Beer Co. decided not to open a brewery, going with a brewpub instead. In the southeasternmost corner of the Mission, it's got a rotating list of 15 beers — mostly but not exclusively sours — along with Spam musubi, house-made charcuterie, and high end bar fare like burgers, fries, and a cheese plate. Don't miss the Nectarine Cobbler, a stone-fruit-and-baking-spices brew that could operate as the gateway sour for IPA fanatics.

Best Non-Mexican Latin American Restaurant
Media Noche
3465 19th St., 415-655-3904 or medianochesf.com

With all the near-infinite Mexican options available in the Mission, a new and beautifully tiled Miami-Cuban restaurants stood out the moment it opened. Named for the sandwiches eaten as late-night street food, Media Noche's titular offering is a Cubano (pork shoulder, ham, Swiss, pickles, and mustard) on brioche. *Brioche!* The best bread! And don't overlook the Mi Abuela Favorita "moon bar," made of guava cheesecake ice cream, crushed maria cookies, and dark chocolate on a stick. The post-Fidel world is full of wonders.

Best New Reason to Go to the Marina
Flores
2030 Union St., 415-796-2926 or floressf.com

Adriano Paganini's Back of the House group is known for fast-casual places like The Bird or Super Duper, but don't let that overshadow its more ambitious restaurants, such as Lolinda or Starbelly. Just as we fell in love with Paganini's Belgian brasserie Belga in 2015, we've found ourselves voluntarily venturing north of California Street for Flores' combination of handmade tortillas, huitlacoche quesadillas and Mayan dishes like s'ikil pak (pumpkin seed, tomato, and habanero dip, and gem lettuce). Flores happens to be next door to Belga, incidentally. Coincidence?

Place We're Glad Took So Damn Long
Mister Jiu's
28 Waverly Place, 415-857-9688 or misterjius.com

After a three-and-a-half-year gestation period, Quince veteran Brandon Jew achieved instant-classic status with at Mister Jiu's. By channeling Cantonese food into new and wonderful directions, Jew revived a cuisine that's too often relegated to takeout status and, creating intensely pleasurable little bites like Dungeness crab cheong fun and shiitake daikon cake alongside sizzling rice soup. The banquet format has given way to an a la carte menu, but the big guns — whole roasted duck, say — remain. Mister Jiu's was truly worth the wait.

Best Local Business We Would Gladly See Become a National Chain
4505 Meats
4505meats.com

Although 4505 Burgers & BBQ on Divisadero Street is the best kind of flagship location — sit down for some meat the right time, and you might see the staff walking a whole roasted pig through the outdoor patio — it's

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Best Place for a Steak and a Martini

The Saratoga

1000 Larkin St., 415-932-6464 or thesaratogasf.com

Basically an upscale steakhouse where grandpas in three-piece suits could have a blast arguing over a Giants game from 1972, The Saratoga is also a contemporary restaurant with a great sense of play. There's a New York steak, sure, and you could definitely go the gin-with-two-olives route. But don't overlook the 'Toga Tots with cheddar and chorizo, the kimchi beef tartare, or the martini-strength Free Trade Agreement (Pisco, Cachaça, Singani, lemon, agave, egg white, and bitters). The walls are mohair, the butter of the day is Art Deco shaped, and the patrons are having a lot of fun.

Best Non-Coffeehouse To Get Work Done In

Covo

981 Mission St., 415-886-6206 or hellocovo.com

Covo

We're a little tired of laptop farms that breed pitching meetings and not altogether unhappy when cafes stealthily get rid of their wifi. Coworking spaces feel like the best compromise when your three roommates are also working from home, and for $3 an hour, Covo in SoMa gives you a beautiful setting with office amenities — while the monthly membership includes bike parking, bottomless coffee, and even day showers. It's professional yet approachable, and less ridiculously luxe than the place in Pac Heights that crows about having an "oil tycoon" as a member. (Hard pass, but thanks!)

Best Michelin Bait

Nightbird

330 Gough St., 415-829-7565 or nightbirdrestaurant.com

Kim Alter's temple to haute gastronomy was a long time coming. The chef-owner of Nightbird, Alter had worked with Suzette Gresham (Acquerello) and Daniel Patterson (Coi, Alta CA, Plum Bar) for years before everything came together for this owl-filled Hayes Valley spot of her own. In that time, many ambitious projects within a one-mile radius vanished. But, along with the attached, seven-seat Linden Room bar, Nightbird is everything the august Michelin tasters could hope for: an exceptional tasting menu of lovingly assembled California dishes, executed by a kitchen that seems thoroughly trained in the classic techniques. Your move, France.

Seafood linguini at Alba-Rays.

Photo by Peter Lawrence Kane

Best New Cajun-Creole

Alba-Ray's

2293 Mission St., 415-872-9409 or albarays.com

You don't have to be entirely certain where the line of demarcation is between Cajun and Creole to judge that this is an authentic spot, with cast-iron grillwork as if you were sauntering down Toulouse Street. Created by the team behind Causwell's and Popson's, it's got a smoked eggplant and carrot jambalaya that's even better than the meat version. Don't miss the rabbit sausage over grits, either. And the check presenters come in the form of a stuffed felt voodoo doll. The Cat People would be proud.

Best Al Fresco (and Elevated) Dining in Chinatown

Chinatown Restaurant

744 Washington St., 415-392-7958, no website

Chinatown Restaurant might look like every other joint in the neighborhood — and have much the same menu — but there's one huge difference: It serves food on a second-story balcony framed with red railing and window boxes filled with succulents. In a post-Empress of China world, no other eatery offers the same heights and views, overlooks Portsmouth Square and makes for a wonderful people-watching perch. The only things it lacks are umbrellas, so pray no birds let loose when flying overhead.

Best Place for Natto, the Fermented Japanese Soybeans

Onigilly Express

Multiple locations, 415-671-4706 or onigilly.com

Natto, a sticky, fermented soybean paste, is incredibly hard to find in restaurants outside of Hawaii and Japan. Apart from Japantown (or Berkeley Bowl), the only other local place we know that sells it is Onigilly Express, a chain of Japanese restaurants — but you won't find it on the menu, because it's generally unlisted. The Embarcadero location has a little sign in the window advertising its existence, and it's occasionally written as an addendum on the whiteboard behind the register. But how many more people would order natto if they knew it was an option?

Best New Portuguese Food

Uma Casa

1550 Church St., 415-829-2264 or umacasarestaurant.com

How San Francisco went this long without a Portuguese restaurant is beyond us. But Telmo Faria, formerly of Tacolicious, went above and beyond with this Noe Valley charmer, full of piri-piri chicken, potato-heavy pasteis de bacalhau (salt cod fritters), and elegant bread and butter. It's warm, it's dare-we-say romantic, and it's unafraid of tackling complicated recipes like an arroz de pato made with duck-confit risotto in lieu of paella plus roasted duck breast and a red-wine reduction. As much as we love the Portuguese corner at Grubstake, Uma Casa fills a gaping void.

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The Bird

Peter Lawrence Kane

Best Fast-Casual (Cheap)

The Bird

115 New Montgomery St., 415-872-9825 or thebirdsf.com

Simple models tend to excel, and in the case of The Bird, Back of the House's fried-chicken spot on art-student-heavy New Montgomery Street, the template appears to have succeeded. Get a (very!) spicy chicken sandwich made with celery, pickles, slaw, and mayo plus curly fries and a beer for only $12.50 — it's called the "Happier Meal" — or otherwise keep it real cheap in the morning with a sausage, egg, and cheese buttermilk biscuit plus three apple fritters for only $6. Either way, let this SoMa spot clog your arteries without unclogging your wallet.

Best Fast-Casual (Slightly-Less-Cheap)

Dabba

71 Stevenson St., 415-236-3984 or dabba.com

Fast-casual can mean joyless salads that emphasize wellness over any kind of aesthetic enjoyment, or it can mean hearty, sustainably prepared meals that feel like a proper lunch. At Dabba, the "ethnically confused" Middle Eastern and South Asian breakfast-and-lunch spot in SoMa, it means choosing a taco, burrito, or bowl and then filling it with meats like chicken or lamb, plus papadums, avocados, quinoa, or egg. How about a kombucha, a chai tea, or even a mango lassi? With food this quick and good, there's no reason to make a fuss over authenticity.

Best New Gastropub

Old Devil Moon

3472 Mission St., no phone, olddevilmoonsf.com

Get your palm read while eating a fried Oysters Rockefeller po' boy at this slightly mysterious New Orleans-accented bar, the only such place in America to have three cicerones at the helm. There's plenty of beer on tap — Fernet, too — but the cocktail roster is equally impressive, including assertive drinks like the Alcachofa (reposado tequila, Cynar, and grapefruit bitters). Like a Ouija board that blesses you with good fortune, Old Devil Moon has just the right amount of black magic — plus it's locally oriented, working with nearby Avedano's Meats, Paulie's Pickling, and Gulfish. And you'd better believe there's a patio.

Old Devil Moon

Peter Lawrence Kane

Google Street View

San Francisco Has Some Great Liquor Store Names

In an increasingly fancified and bougie San Francisco, the only retail sector that's seemingly immune to gentrification is the corner liquor store. Unapologetically gritty and no-frills, our rough-trade corner markets have no aspirations to boutique status, describing prices in terms of an item's "out the door" cost. That lack of pretense comes across in the the stores' names, which are often unintentionally ironic, inadvertently misspelled, or charmingly stupid. Capturing the spirit of the urban booze-buying ethic, a few stand out.

The proprietors of **Drink Liquor** (601 Second Ave.) seem to know exactly what you're going to do the moment you step out of the store. With an obviously hand-painted storefront sign whose paintbrush strokes are wearing off at noticeably different rates, Drink Liquor is a praiseworthy illustration of truth and integrity in convenience-store naming.

It's one day at a time at **AA Market** (667 Broderick St.), the liquor store whose initialized name is a enduringly amusing contradiction in terms. No need to keep your alcohol anonymous at this corner market, because heading to AA to get drunk is a NoPa tradition.

The cute play on words of **Liquor Locker** (1223 Taraval St.) is a whimsical ray of sunshine in the foggy Inner Parkside. While otherwise unremarkable, the name renders Liquor Locker a lock to make this list.

Whether it was intentional or not, the possessive-singular apostrophe in the name **49er's Liquor & Groceries** (3701 Mission St.) has spared the ownership all manner of legal hassles from the NFL and the San Francisco 49ers football organization. Brands pay millions to license NFL names and likenesses, but this Bernal Heights liquor store found a great hack to do it on the cheap.

The only arguably nice establishment to make this list is the Outer Sunset's **Easy Money** (2312 Irving St.), which is kept exceptionally clean and has legit-nice handsome wooden shelving on which to display its liquors and groceries. The self-proclaimed "biggest little market in San Francisco" is is also topped with a banner that inaccurately declares, "If we don't have it, you don't need it!"

Google Street View

The Microbrew Scene Explodes in Malty Foam

Apartment-hunting in San Francisco is a nightmarish Sisyphean ordeal, but apparently late-20th-century deindustrialization left this city with a plethora of large, commercial spaces suitable for setting up a brewery. (When the owners of Standard Deviant were on the hunt for a home base, they sifted through dozens of potential sites.) And while Portland retains the title of Craft Beer Capital of America on a per capita basis, San Francisco has seen an explosion of excellent to where the Brewers Guild now contains more than 30 members.

Magnolia has been in operation in the Haight for decades, but the expansion into the Dogpatch was a shrewd move for a firm that filed for bankruptcy not long before. **Smokestack at Magnolia Brewery** (2505 Third St.) pours cask ales and the company's "core four" — including Kalifornia Kolsch and Proving Ground IPA — at this production-facility-slash-gastropub, which smokes its meat over almond wood. Amid the pickles and the pecan pie, there's a killer chopped pork sandwich with vinegar sauce and creamy slaw, plus tri-tip.

On an stretch of 14th Street lined with auto-body shops, **Standard Deviant Brewing** (280 14th St.) opened last year and has spent most of its energy on building a distribution network among S.F. bars. (Being in the Mission makes deliveries fairly simple, after all.) But the space, filled with picnic tables and arcade games, is an inviting spot for a pint of smoked rye pale ale or brown Altbier.

Further south, **Seven Stills Brewery and Distillery** (1439 Egbert Ave.) set up shop in the Bayview with an operation that produces all manner of booze, and the kettles sours and Small Axe Pale Ale made by **Harmonic Brewing** (1050 26th St.) aren't that far away, in Dogpatch.

Over in Portola, **Ferment Drink Repeat** (2636 San Bruno Ave.) feels like a home-brew operation with a storefront. The neighborhood-y spot puts out a regular rotation of unusually named beer with a fair number of political references, from When They Go Low, We Go Rye (a session IPA) to a raspberry porter called The Queen's Spare.

Meanwhile, Oakland's Argentine-inflected Woods Beer continues its expansion, fueled by its MateVeza IPA, made with the ubiquitous tea-like herb from the Southern Hemisphere. **Woods Island Co**., the so-called "beer beach" on Treasure Island (422 Clipper Cove Way) burst on the scene last summer, and **Woods Outbound** (4045 Judah St.) solidified the quirky brewery's hold on the Outer Sunset with a bar reminiscent of a postwar commuter train.

Ferment Drink Repeat
Eric Pratt

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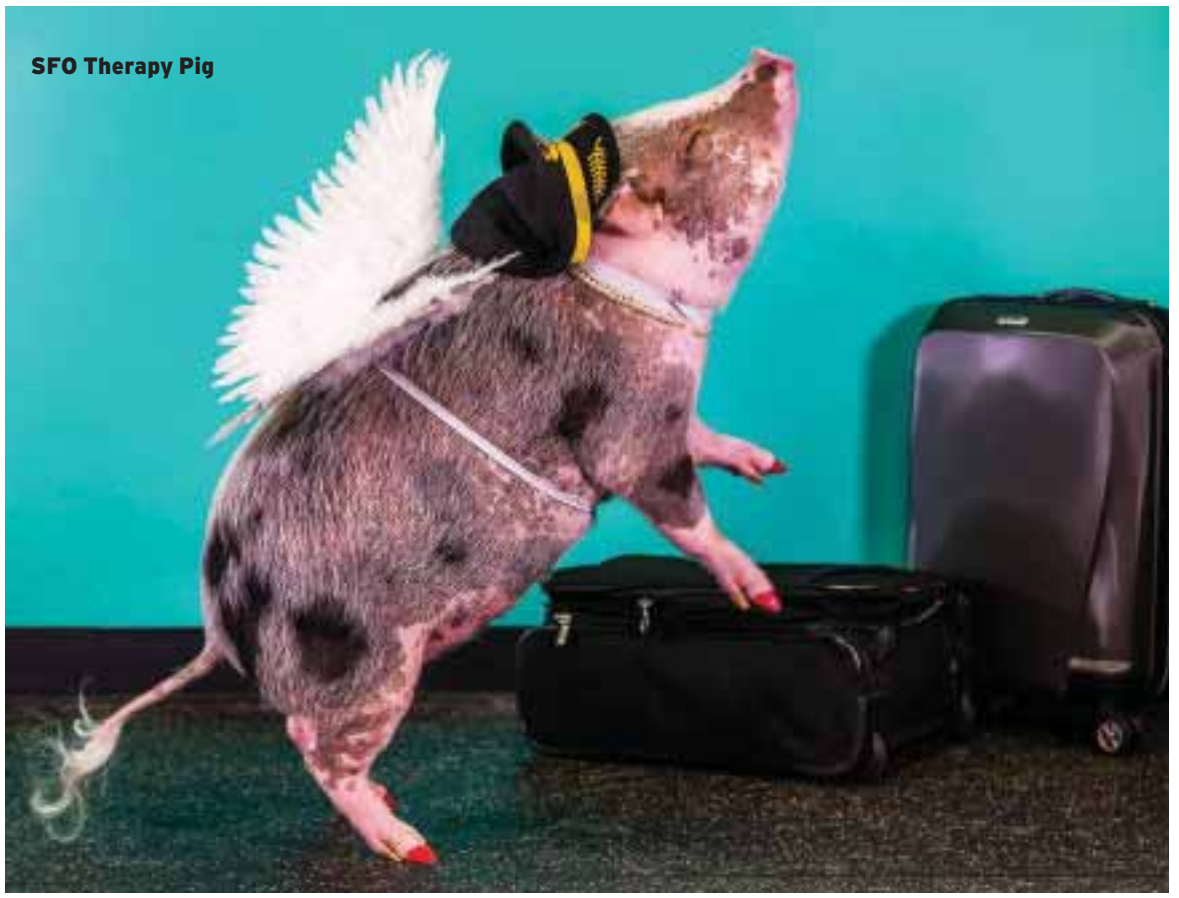
SFO Therapy Pig

Courtesy of SFO

Best Ed Lee Critic
Equipto

The fiercest and most authentic critic of Mayor Ed Lee is not found at City Hall, but out confronting him at cafes, heckling him at his speeches, and hunger-striking in front of police stations. Longtime local hip-hop standout Equipto burst onto the fucking-with-Ed-Lee scene in his infamous 2015 "You're a disgrace to Asians!" coffee shop confrontation, which went viral. Since Lee's re-election, Equipto has led choruses of boos at many of his speeches and got arrested for disrupting the mayor at a fancy Fairmount Hotel breakfast address. Those recent hecklings were intended to bring attention to the Justice for Mario Woods effort, but Equipto's more recent advocacy has been at a string of public meetings for new Homeless Navigation Centers.

Best Meaningless Symbolic City Hall Legislation
Granting Landmark Status to the Pride Flag at Market and Castro

They pass some silly, symbolic, and ultimately pointless legislation at Board of Supervisors meetings, but one symbolic resolution has meaning for all San Franciscans. Supervisor Jeff Sheehy wants to grant city landmark status to the giant rainbow flag at Harvey Milk Plaza at Market and Castro streets. You'd think the site would have been designated as a landmark years ago, but it never was — and it was never meant to be permanent. This display is still not officially sanctioned, so there's nothing that could stop the city from taking it down — unless Sheehy's resolution passes. It would also be a poignant nod to Pride flag designer Gilbert Baker, who passed away in March (and who erected that very flag himself).

Best City Hall Task Force
San Francisco Cannabis Legalization Task Force

Yes, San Francisco has a Cannabis Legalization Task Force, and oh has it been busy, meeting since well before the November 2016 passage of Prop. 64 that legalized the recreational use of cannabis in California. Consisting of dispensary owners, attorneys, and cancer and HIV survivors, it's working until Jan. 1, 2018 to develop a framework for the sale, distribution and taxation of marijuana in our fair city. They've already worked out a one-percent excise tax on the sale of all marijuana products, a city-operated bank for the largely cash-only industry, and a permitting system for pop-up pot tents at big events. Upon "hashing out" such minutiae, San Francisco may become a marijuana-tourism destination on par with Amsterdam.

Best Local Trump Critic in Washington
Sen. Kamala Harris

Our former District Attorney rose through the ranks to become California's Attorney General, and Kamala Harris is now our junior senator. A reliable f-bomb-dropping Trump opponent who puts her colleague Dianne Feinstein to shame, Harris has been adamant in her defense of undocumented immigrants and over Attorney General Jeff Sessions' need to resign due to his obvious perjury. Harris trolls Trump on Twitter like she was one of those rogue federal agency accounts, winning mentions as a possible 2020 presidential candidate — not unlike another first-term African American senator we can name. Her rebuke of Idaho congressman Raul Labrador's remark that "Nobody dies because they don't have access to health care" is an absolute classic: "You might as well say, 'Well, people don't starve because they don't have food.' What the fuck is that?'"

Best Animal Mascot
LiLou the SFO Therapy Pig

We're all about the eccentrics who keep parrots or walk Siamese cats on leashes or bring 11-foot Florida alligators on Muni, but there's one animal that embodies the spirit of San Francisco like no other: LiLou, the trained, 3-year-old "therapy pig" in a pink tutu who comes to SFO once per month to bring joy to weary travelers — or confirm every stereotype they've ever had about the Bay Area they instant they deplane. She's the first non-canine in the "Wag Brigade" partnership with the SPCA, and her handlers stick to terminals with carpet, so that LiLou's (painted) cloven hooves don't slide.

Best Candidate for a Renaming
Isis Street

In *Archer*, the International Secret Intelligence Service (ISIS) was dissolved by the federal government right around the time that, IRL, the successor organization to Al-Qaeda was reviving the caliphate by decapitating people in northern Iraq who didn't uphold its rigid (and incorrect) interpretation of Islam. You're really supposed to refer to the Islamic State as "Daesh" to avoid legitimizing it, but we still can't help cringing when we pass by Isis Street, a one-block alley in SoMa between 12th and 13th streets that runs parallel to the benevolently named Bernice Street. Considering that San Francisco is sensitive enough to rename Lech Walesa Street to Dr. Tom Waddell Place after the Polish anti-communist leader made homophobic remarks, it's not entirely out of the question. Oh, and the Isis is also what the River Thames is called, upstream from Oxfordshire. Maybe they should rethink that, too, cause terrorists are such jerks and all.

Best BART Musician
Roger Brooks

If you're lucky enough to catch a Roger Brooks performance at the Powell Street BART station, you might be tempted to miss your train so you can listen to his dulcet piano tunes a little longer. Brooks, a 23-year-old from Philadelphia who's been homeless for the last three years, employs a

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simple set-up that belies just how good his music is. He sports terrycloth sweatbands and Adidas apparel, and works only with a battery-powered keyboard that he balances on his lap. A deft musician with nimble fingers that flutter across the keys with impressive agility, Brooks makes celestial compositions with interlocking melodies that sound like shooting stars. Waiting for BART is never fun, but with Brooks echoing in the background, you can't help but enjoy yourself.

Best Pissed-Off Supervisor Moment

Malia Cohen and Waterbend

It's fun seeing politicians get riled up — and sometimes scary. We wouldn't want to get on the wrong side of Sup. Malia Cohen, particularly after she called out of Bayview developer Waterbend. "Come grow with us as Bayview becomes the next Mission," the front page of their website stated — along with an offensive ad of tiny white women working out while a Black man looks on. Cohen wasn't having it. "I would politely advise @WaterbendSf, and their ad consulting team, to get a firm understanding of the word 'columbusing,'" she tweeted. "This is what people are talking about when we use words like 'cultural incompetence.' Your description of your planned housing, 'urban living at its best,' is #culturalappropriation at its worst. And what do you mean by 'Grow With Us as Bayview Becomes The Next Mission'?! The Mission is ground-zero for aggressive tech #gentrification." Yikes. This all went down on a weekend, but the team behind Waterbend hustled fast, quickly replacing the front page of site with something blander and less offensive. Go, Cohen, go!

Best SFMTA Mess-Up

NextMuni Prediction Fail

It was one of the the wettest winters on record, and many, many people spent it standing in leaky bus stops in the rain as all Muni predictors went down. Was the 22-Fillmore coming in two minutes, or was it actually 22? No one knew. The problem was part SFMTA, part AT&T, and part NextBus, but it was the SFMTA who felt the blow of soggy commuters' rage on social media.

Best Recent Crime

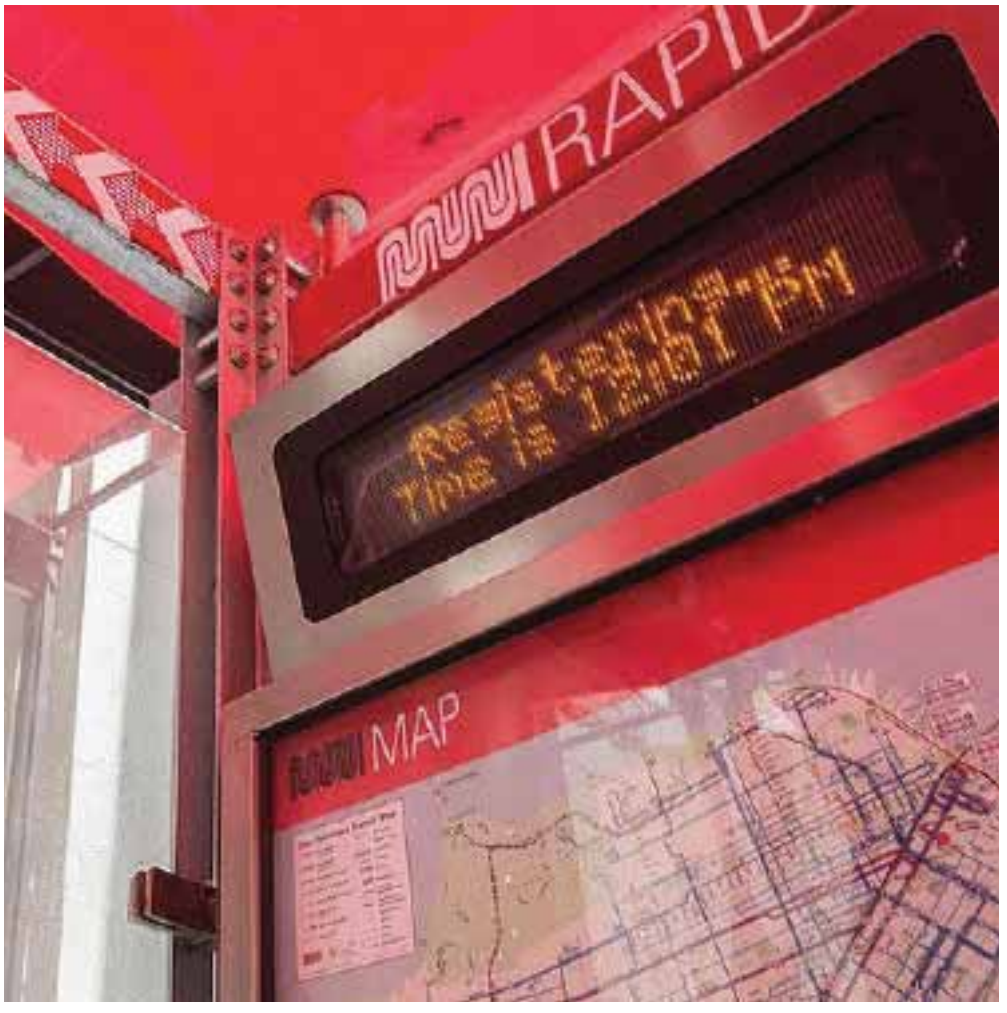
People Got Arrested For Base Jumping in the Tenderloin

On Feb. 28, three people in their 20s thought it was a brilliant idea to jump off a building on the 300 block of Jones Street at 11:30 p.m. Tenderloin officers spotted the trio falling with parachutes, and arrested two men — but a woman escaped capture. They were charged with trespassing and conspiracy.

Best Animal-Control Moment

Capturing the Castro Turkey

The city's Animal Care and Control officers don't just spend their time rescuing kittens from under houses or pursuing domesticated parrots released into the wild. Every now and again, they're



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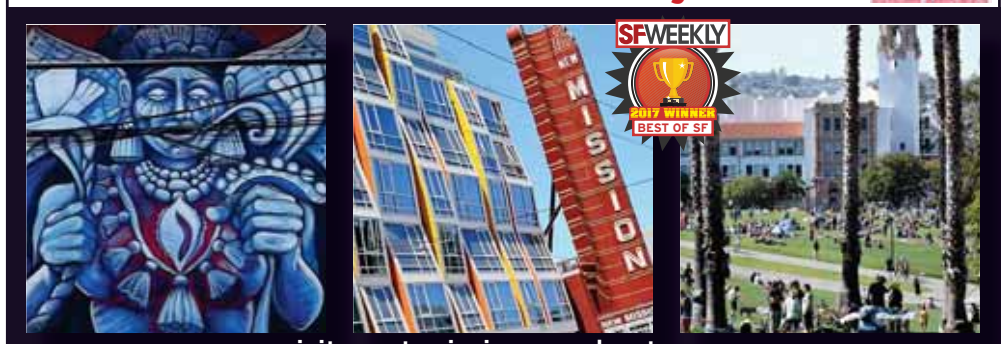

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faced with a fiercer, uglier competition. In mid-March, an adolescent turkey was spotted parading through the Castro, but it took four days for one Officer Edith and her entourage to trap the "wiley flapling."

Best Place to Walk Four Blocks Without Hearing English

Clement Street

There are so many places in San Francisco where this is possible, but this year's award goes to Clement Street between Sixth and 10th streets — specifically on a weekday morning. Grab a boba tea and stroll along the busy street to encounter parents walking their kids to school, shopkeepers sweeping the sidewalk in front of their business, and vendors pulling out trays of fruit grown thousands of miles away, to sell at a startling price to hip white residents who remember tasting mangosteens once in Thailand.

Lava Mae

Best Nonprofit for People Living on the Streets

Lava Mae

Sometimes the biggest way to make a difference is by starting really, really small. While there are many amazing nonprofits working to assist the communities living on our streets, Lava Mae has the simplest goal: Restore homeless people's dignity by providing them with free showers and toilets. The small nonprofit started with an old converted Muni bus, and it now has a number of trailers that they truck all over the city.

Best Ferry to Take for No Reason

S.F. to Sausalito

From the Ferry Building, $11.75 for adults, goldengateferry.org

The knocks against using our ferry system as a means of public transportation are all well known. The routes are limited, it's seldom the fastest way to travel, and the cost of a ticket continues to rise. Then again, it's hard to beat leaning on the safety rail as ocean spray hits your face, perhaps with a Bloody Mary in hand. And the best way to enjoy the splendors of our ferry system is with no destination in mind. If you agree, the San Francisco to Sausalito ride is a great place to start. Not only will you get a rare view of the Bay Bridge from below, but you'll also float past Alcatraz and Angel Island. The scenery truly can't be beat, and the on-board bartenders always deliver. Pick a date and spend an afternoon at sea.

Best Cheap Birthday Party

Golden Gate Park Bunny Meadow

Trying to plan a birthday party for a friend is usually a major pain. You have too many people to reserve tables at the bar they like, the Giants are on a road trip, and you have reasonable suspicions that your Venmo requests for reimbursement from the guest list will likely go ignored. Given the situation, why not plan a day at the park with your own reserved slice of the outdoors? Golden Gate Park's Bunny Meadow is located behind the Conservatory of Flowers and offers an ideal space for picnics, light recreational sports, or even a few rounds of sloshball. (You'll need cans though — no kegs allowed.) To procure a permit, simply call the nice folks at Rec and Park and fork over about $30, then enjoy nature's beauty and all the alcohol your savvy savings make possible.

Best Test to See If Someone Reads the News

City Hall Lights

For those who claim to be in touch with current events, there are few party tricks more fun than asking them to explain the meaning of that evening's lighting at City Hall. While some answers are obvious — Giants in the playoffs, Fourth of July — others take a bit more sleuthing to uncover. There was the night City Hall turned purple in honor of Prince's death last April, or the pink hue that greeted protestors at this year's Women's March. Locals will also easily identify the rainbow lights that take over the building during Pride. How City Hall will recognize the upcoming 50th anniversary of the Summer of Love remains to be seen, but until then, enjoy testing the acumen of your peers and racking up the Instagram karma.

Best Dolores Park Hookup

Coconut Man

If your first instinct seeing a man coming towards you with a machete in Dolores Park is to run, think again. The gentleman in front of you is likely to be Michael, the Coconut Guy. If it's sunny in Dolores Park, you can bet he'll be there, ready to lop off the top of a fresh coconut and plop in a straw. The fruit itself costs about $6, but only a fool would pass on the extra charge to enrich your treat with a generous pour of Captain Morgan's rum. As the colorful characters that give San Francisco its heart continue to disappear, let us celebrate the gift of Coconut Guy will all our livers.

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SPORTS & RECREATION

Steve Kerr

Stan Olszewski/Special to S.F. Examiner

Best Throwback Warriors Jersey
Matt Barnes

Kudos are in order to any Warriors fans who kept their Matt Barnes jerseys in a closet for nearly a decade and who can now rock them once again. Barnes, of course, was part of the iconic 2007 "We Believe" Warriors squad that beat the top-seeded Dallas Mavericks in the first round of the playoffs. After leaving the Warriors in 2008, Barnes went to play for … wait for it … the Phoenix Suns, Orlando Magic, Los Angeles Lakers, Los Angeles Clippers, Memphis Grizzlies, and Sacramento Kings. Thankfully, he's now back in blue, having been signed to fill the void caused by Kevin Durant's injury toward the end of the regular season. How much he'll see the court during the team's current playoff run is up in the air, but there's never been a better time to dust off your Barnes jersey and get a little crazy.

Best Giant to Have Your Back in a Fight
Michael Morse

Who knows exactly why you might find yourself a few drinks deep with a member of the Giants as a brawl gets under way, but if you do, there's no one more suited to the task than outfielder Michael Morse. Recently returned to the roster after stints with Miami and Pittsburgh, Morse will be forever remembered as a home run-happy key figure in the team's 2014 World Series run. Basically, the dude can mash — and he looks like he could easily be a background character in a Vin Diesel movie. It might be fun to play video games with Hunter Pence or have a stoic round of golf with Buster Posey, but if it's bar fights we're talking about, you've got to roll with Morse.

Best Sports Protest
Colin Kaepernick Kneeling for the National Anthem

He may no longer be a 49er, but Colin Kaepernick remains a winner for taking a Black Lives Matter stand — namely, not standing for the National Anthem. Kaepernick made global headlines for his simple act of defiance last August, and numerous NFL players and high school students around the country joined him. His kneeling even landed him the cover of Time. Right-wing media cast Kap as a traitor, but the quarterback quietly took the high road, making donations in excess of a million dollars to Meals on Wheels, Love Army for Somalia, and other charitable causes. Kaepernick remains unemployed in the NFL, an organization that employs countless repeat domestic-violence offenders.

Best Warrior Not in the Playoffs
Steve Kerr

There's something missing from this year's iteration of the Golden State Warriors' delightful and dominant playoff run. Our thoughts and prayers go out to coach Steve Kerr, who's sidelined with a spinal-fluid leak resulting from a complication from back surgery two years ago. Kerr is the architect of this Warriors team, but the return of his back ailments leaves him indefinitely unable to captain his own ship. His return is uncertain, and it's a sad but real possibility that Kerr might never be able to coach again. But his heart and persistence through excruciating physical pain remind us that basketball is just a game, and the real warrior is Steve Kerr.

Best Presidentially Pardoned San Francisco Giant
Willie McCovey

Like any U.S. president, Barack Obama issued a flurry of pardons in his final days in office. You may have heard about Chelsea Manning's commutation, but among the 273 other people Obama pardoned was San Francisco Giants Hall of Fame first baseman Willie McCovey. The namesake of McCovey Cove, he was convicted of tax evasion back in 1996 and sentenced to several years' probation. It's not like McCovey was a huge tax cheat — he simply failed to report some income from signing autographs at memorabilia

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Hunter Pence

shows. He paid his fine and completed his probation long ago, but the pardon removes any restrictions on McCovey's right to vote, run for office, and exercise other civic abilities.

Best Athlete to Appear on Bill Nye the Science Guy's Show

Hunter Pence

As of press time, the San Francisco Giants are dead last in the NL West standings. It's one of those years for which the high point might be seeing a player make a TV show cameo — and in this case, it's crazy-eyes right fielder Hunter Pence on the new Netflix series Bill Nye Saves the World. Pence took his signature frizzy hair and fearsome bat to demonstrate the concept of panspermia — the hypothesis that life on Earth was introduced by bacteria from meteoroids striking the planet. To demonstrate this, Pence hit a baseball toward a model version of Earth. When his ball struck the planet on the set, he exclaimed, "I panspermia'd all over the place!"

Best Yoga Class to Tone and Tan Your Body

CardioTone

360 Third St., 415-534-5049 or cardio-tone.com

CardioTone offers classes in interval training, spin, TRX, and yoga. Since the summer of 2015, the SoMa location has also offered Rooftop Yoga classes Tuesday and Wednesday evenings and on Saturday mornings. This being San Francisco, there are some perks to hosting classes outdoors; namely, that you don't have to worry about heat, humidity, sun stroke, or sunburn. Of course, the rain pretty much quashes these classes in the winter and spring, so you might want to try flexing Warrior Two from the top of a skyscraper while you still can.

Best New Gym

17th Street Athletic Club

3265 17th St., 415-250-2419 or 17thstreetathleticclub.com

Don't expect a soundtrack of pop songs, an instructor wearing eyeliner, or a disco ball in these spin classes. 17th Street Athletic Club, which opened last fall on 17th and Capp streets, is a multi-purpose gym that caters heavily to the experienced cyclist. Spin classes feature top-of-the-line bikes taught by a number of badass women — many of whom race semi-professionally. The classes are fast-paced and sweaty, and the crowd is remarkably diverse: people of all ages, genders, sizes, and ethnicities show up to spin it out.

Best Opportunity to Redo Bike Infrastructure

Turk Street

Oh, Turk Street. This brand-new "bike lane" has been the subject of many a news article, angry tweet, and even a physical protest. As proposed by the SFMTA, it was meant to be parking protected — but opposition from the Fire Department stalled the plan, after they claimed it would inhibit trucks with ladders from reaching flaming buildings. Now, the bike lane is only "protected" by paint, and cars can be seen parked and idling in the crucial cycle pathway daily. As the highly anticipated first bike lane for the Tenderloin, this has so far been an epic failure.

Best New Bike Infrastructure

The Protected Intersection at Ninth and Division streets

We're at a weird moment in San Francisco cycling policy, where the Bike Coalition has opposed a proposed bike lane for the first time. (It would be on Turk Street, and instead of any separation from parking cars, it would simply be painted on. Take one look at the de-facto Uber parking corridor the Valencia Street bike lanes have become, and you'll get it.) However, SFMTA did a good job repaving the intersection of Ninth and Division streets with San Bruno Avenue in SoMa, installing pedestrian safety islands and raised crosswalks, with plenty of bright green striping. It's the first of its kind in the city, and even though it only applies to east-west cyclists, we hope for more. Onward to the Idaho Stop!

Best Neighborhood Bike Shop

Wiggle Bicycles

518 Waller St., wigglebicycles.com

Walk into Wiggle Bicycles on a Saturday afternoon and there's more than likely at least one dog, someone sipping on a beer, and a friendly "what can I help you with today?" greeting from the staff. The shop has bounced around a few different storefronts near the corner of Waller and Steiner streets, but its loyal customer base has followed. Part of the appeal is the range of bikes they carry: refurbished vintage rides sit next to to high-end mountain bikes. Cyclists can stop in for a child's seat for a commuter, or a tune-up on a racing steed. Whatever the need, Wiggle has the neighborhood covered, and the mechanics check any bike snobbery at the door.

Best Urban Spot to See Coyotes

Buena Vista Park

Urban coyotes are not a myth, and there is currently no better place to spot one than Buena Vista Park. These large, undomesticated canines are relatively unafraid of humans, and

can often be spotted trotting along behind a jogger, sunning on a rock, or sitting up high on the hillside, perusing the packs of fat little dogs that are walked through the park daily. They're pretty easy to see — but keep a distance, and don't feed them. These babies are wild, and should stay that way.

Best Place to Get a Free Workout

Lyon Street Steps

$35 for a SoulCycle class. $75 for a yoga handstand workshop. $150 for a pair of cycling shoes. Working out can be expensive in this city — but it doesn't have to be. Next time it's sunny, lace up those worn-out sneakers and head to the Marina to sprint up and down all 332 of Lyon Street's steps. President Barack Obama once ran them when he was visiting San Francisco, and the view from the top is absolutely spectacular — as are the bragging rights once you've climbed the whole thing.

Best Park No One Knows About

Cottage Row Mini Park

This may come as shocking news, but there are more parks in San Francisco than Dolores, Alamo Square, and Golden Gate. Some of them even come in tiny, bite-size parcels, like Japantown's Cottage Row Mini Park, located on Sutter and Webster streets. The itty-bitty tiered garden is filled with roses and nestled next to a quaint little row of cottages — hence its name. Pick up some cold green tea and onigiri from Nijiya Market for a picnic, and bring a book.

Best AT&T Park Hack

Hell or High Watermelon, with rind, at The Garden

Going to AT&T Park means you're overpaying for beer. There's simply no way around this sad fact of watching live sports. However, for the intrepid drinker, the ballpark does have a few rewards for those willing to seek them. The best of the bunch can be found at The Garden, located behind the center field bleachers. Amidst the fresh produce is a bar where one can order 21st Amendment's signature Hell or High Watermelon on draft. The ideal light beer for a sunny day at the yard, each one comes with the signature slice of watermelon on the rim, making it a far better bang for your buck than the diluted domestics available elsewhere in the stadium.

Best Team to Follow Before the Bandwagon

San Francisco Deltas

While the Bay Area is hardly a mecca for soccer, there's nothing worse than sleeping on a team until they make the playoffs. Bandwagon fans are worse than those who outright acknowledge they don't care in the first place. So now is the time to check out the San Francisco Deltas.

Hanna Quevedo

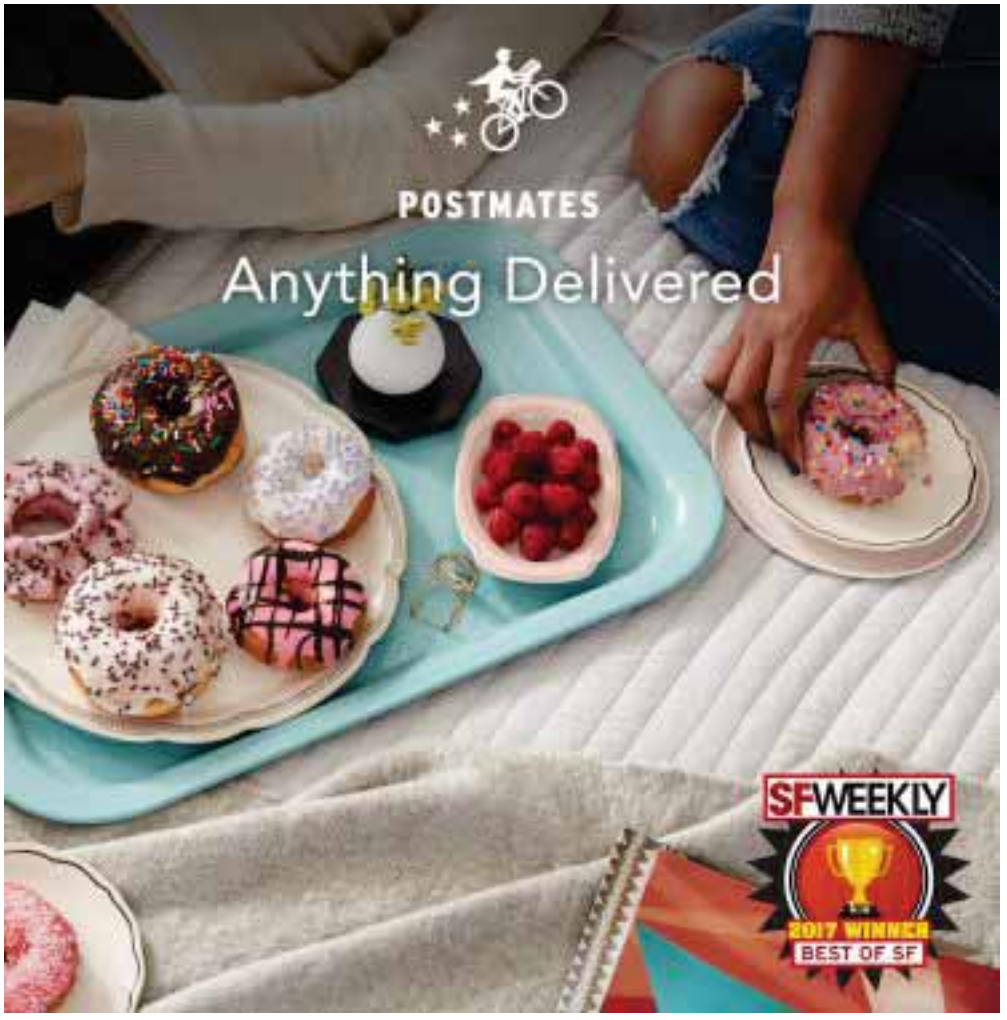
Part of the North American Soccer League, the Deltas play out of Kezar Stadium, former home to both the San Francisco 49ers and Oakland Raiders. As an added bonus, Kezar now has 3,800 seats refurbished from Candlestick Park. The Deltas seems ready to embrace the history of San Francisco sports, so why not embrace them?

Best Local Sports Podcast

McCovey Chroncast

mccoveychronicles.com

Let's face it: The San Francisco Giants are bad right now. Like historically awful, actually. Luckily, baseball aficionados can turn to the McCovey Chroncast, the podcast spinoff of Grant Brisbee's must-read *SB Nation* site, McCovey Chronicles. Hosted by Bryan Murphy and Doug Bruzzone, the Chroncast is a great way to hear people who are even angrier than you are about Brandon Belt's seeming inability to string two good games together. Whether the Giants are getting blown out by the Dodgers or celebrating their latest World Series victory, the McCovey Chroncast is the ideal complement to the long slog that is the baseball season.



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Good Vibrations Antique Vibrator Museum

Best Underground Record Shop

Vinyl Dreams

593 Haight St., 415-379-0974 or vinyldreams.storenvy.com

While roaming drunk around the Lower Haight with some friends late one Saturday night, we started to feel the ground vibrate underneath us. It turned out that underground record store Vinyl Dreams was throwing a party. After being greeted by a handful of people grooving to bass-y house music amid shelves of records, we learned there's always something going down at Vinyl Dreams, which hosts events pretty much every day of the week — even Mondays. Electronic music is the store's speciality, and there's guaranteed to be someone spinning tunes no matter what time of day you go.

Best Place to Get in Touch With Your Grandmother's Sexuality

Good Vibrations Antique Vibrator Museum

1620 Polk St., 415-345-0400 or antiquevibratormuseum.com

Vibrators are not a modern invention, and the earliest model is believed to have been invented in 1869. Plug in and take a trip back to the early days of electrified female stimulation at the Good Vibrations' Antique Vibrator Museum, a free attraction at the back of Good Vibes' Polk Street location. The late, great founder of the adult toy store, Joani Blank, collected antique vibrators as a hobby, and her collection became a treasury spanning from the late 1800s up to the 1970s. Free docent tours take place at 3 p.m. on the third Sunday of every month, and private tours can be arranged by calling the shop.

Best Place to Buy Obscure Foreign Magazines

Good News

3920 24th St., 415-821-3694

This dog-friendly establishment has been around for more than a decade, and it's the best place to find foreign magazines and international newspapers. Want to get your hands on that controversial *Vogue India* issue with Kendall Jenner on the cover? Love the BBC show *Top Gear* and want to check out its accompanying monthly car magazine? You got it. Good News also has hard-to-find-in-the-U.S. publications, like the Australian fashion magazine *Russh*, the British monthly music journal *Mojo*, and the U.K. newspaper *Financial Times'* secondary publication, *FT Weekend*.

Best Place to Perfect Your Stevie Nicks Look

Wallflower Boutique

1176 Valencia St., 415-341-0314 or shopwallflower.com

Famous for her witchy-folk aesthetic, Stevie Nicks is associated with long, flowy clothing and billowing silhouettes, often covered in velvet, lace, or fringe. If this sounds like a look you're currently into, head to Wallflower Boutique in the Mission. Though the vintage store sells clothes from a range of decades, it specializes in the '70s. Think of Wallflower as a one-stop shop

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for all things Nicks, a place where you can buy a sheer, floor-length dress, wide-brimmed felt hat, and a moon-pendant necklace all in the same visit. If you want to extend the '70s vibe to your apartment, Wallflower also sells crystal candles, succulents, and macrame art.

Best Place to Get 1950s-Style Eyewear

See Eyewear

651 Market St., 415-284-4554 or seeeywear.com

Cat-eye glasses are having a moment, so it's not that hard to find them — if you're not picky and only care about having one or two models to choose from, that is. If you prefer quality and quantity, you're better off visiting See, which has an uncanny knack for sourcing bold, unique 1950s styles. For the minimalist, there are standard, wing-tipped glasses that come in bright hues like orange, pink, and green, and a lot of them have ombre shading and color gradations. True to mid-century fashion, there are also crystal bedazzled cat-eye shades that come in springy pastels like lilac, sky blue, and ivory.

Best New Spa, Japanese or Otherwise

Onsen

466 Eddy St., 415-441-4987 or onsensf.com

Who knew that the most gorgeous steam room and cold plunge would be located in a former auto-body shop in the Tenderloin? Or that in front, mushroom dumplings, soft-egg custard, and marvelous sake would be served? Onsen, Caroline Smith and Sunny Simmons' combined Japanese restaurant and spa, is unique and meticulously detailed, from the glowing Himalayan salt bricking up the windows in the dry sauna to the keys decorating the restroom. You've never relaxed like this, maybe ever.

Best Laundromat Name

Get The Funk Out

1901 McAllister St., no website

Haight to Wash, Wishy Washy and Brain Wash were all contenders for this contest, but Get The Funk Out wins for its to-the-point and almost-swear-word title. It's also located on the corner of McAllister and Lyon streets, which means a great cup of coffee from Matching Half or a burrito from Green Chile Kitchen are only a block away.

Best Analog Camera Shop

Glass Key Photo

442 Haight St., 415-829-9946 or glasskeyphoto.com

Shops for cameras that require film are closing left right and center. The shuttering of Adolph Gasser this year has pushed the city's remaining analog buffs to the Lower Haight's Glass Key Photo. Tiny and stacked with boxes of paper,

Onsen's spa, at 466 Eddy St.

Courtesy of Onsen

Animal House

developing chemicals, and camera parts, it's a bit tough to navigate — but shopkeepers Matt Osborne and Gordon Szeto know where everything is and will always take the time to show a young hipster how to load up her brand-new-but-old 35mm camera. It may be one of the last, but it's also definitively the best.

Best Place to Buy Girl-Power Jewelry

Fiat Lux

3169 16th St., 415-748-2471 or fiatluxsf.com

Fiat Lux recently moved from Church Street to 16th Street, and the bigger storefront means more vintage, homemade, and eccentric jewelry for your perusal. This isn't your grandmother's jewelry store: Diamond-encrusted skulls, butterfly-wing necklaces and bold statement pieces are scattered among beautiful, modern opal rings. The staff are all about women buying "power pieces" for themselves, and have even customized a line of jewelry featuring a tiny hand flipping you off. Twenty-five percent of the FU line's sales go to She Should Run, an organization that helps get women into elected positions.

Best Spot to Buy Cannabis For Your Dog

Animal House

157 Fillmore St., 415-552-0233 or theanimalhousesf.com

Got a stressed-out, anti-social, shaky, or aggressive dog? Head over to Animal House, the pet supply store in Lower Haight that has an entire display dedicated to providing pets with cannabinoids. The non-psychoactive treats are a great natural tool for calming down overwhelmed critters, and come in tincture or treat form. The natural meds are great for flying, long road trips, or crowded backyard BBQs.

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Best Wig Shop
Helen's Wigs
773 Divisadero St., 415-921-4647, no website
The tiny wig shop on Divisadero caters to all types — be they drag queens, Burning Man attendees, or women who've lost their hair due to chemotherapy. Helen Kwon has been in the wig business since 1980, and carries around 200 wigs at any time, ranging from $29 Bay to Breakers accessories to $800 wigs made from real human hair.

Best Shop Dog
Spike at Onyx
289 Divisadero St., 415-431-6699, no website
He's tiny. He's rotund. He sits on laps. And he can often be found slouched on the sidewalk outside Onyx, basking in the sunshine. Spike the chihuahua is a real cool dude, and he calls the fashion-forward boutique on Divisadero Street home several days a week. In addition to this XS cuddle buddy, the shop has a vintage round sofa and a friendly staff — a perfect place to curl up for a quick doggy snuggle before continuing on with your day.

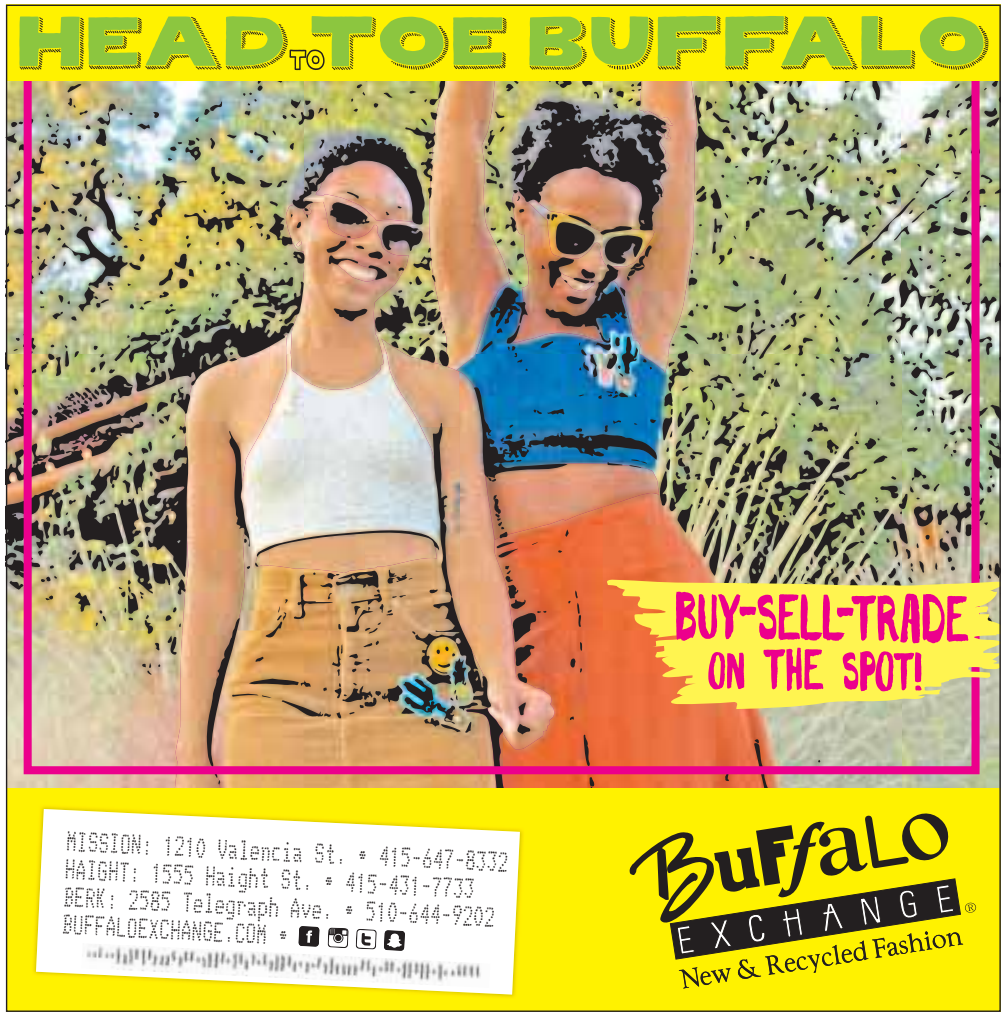
Best Place to Buy Things No One Needs
Rare Device
600 Divisadero St., 415-863-3969 or raredevice.net
A bundle of tiny wooden spoons. An enamel pin shaped like a taco. A miniature decorative buoy. All of these items (and much, much more) can be found at Rare Device's Divisadero location. Stepping into the tiny, beautifully curated shop feels like walking into a treasure chest of gorgeous objects, and one can spend 30 minutes just picking up and appreciating all the oddities the store carries. While lovely, almost nothing in the shop is actually useful, except perhaps the $30 Japanese butter dish.

Best New Record Store
Originals Vinyl
701 Fillmore St., 415-660-8779 or originalsvinyl.com
Last October, Originals Vinyl opened in a long-empty corner storefront on Hayes and Fillmore streets. The shop is carefully curated to feature a classic and pristine collection of records, ranging from bluegrass to jazz to rock to rap — but there are a couple key things that set Originals apart. First, about 50 percent of the store is reserved for back stock, so if customers can't find something in the boxes up front, they just need to ask. It might be floating around behind the counter. Second, Originals offers ultrasonic vinyl cleaning, for $2.50 a record. With such attention to detail, record fans can be sure that whatever vinyl they purchase is squeaky-clean and dust-free.

Best Way to Trip Balls (Without Drugs)
Zazen Isolation Float
2219 Filbert St., 415-806-6899 or zazensf.com
If the idea of floating in pitch-black salt water with nothing but your thoughts sounds terrifying, it shouldn't! Isolation floats are certainly bizarre, but in a world of group texts, refreshing your inbox, and breaking news, spending an hour in what basically amounts to an artificial womb can be pretty awesome. At Zazen in the Marina, interested parties can reserve time to float in two spacious chambers designed to help you relax. The experience can lead to some crazy thoughts not entirely dissimilar from what psychedelics might offer. Before any hypothetical panic attacks set in, floaters are welcome to open the door or take a break as often as they'd like.

Best Local History Apparel
Paloma/Gangs of San Francisco
112 Gough St., 415-342-2625 or palomahayes.com
Yeah, we know you "Heart SF," but thanks to Gangs of San Francisco, now you can show it while still looking cool. Available exclusively at Paloma in Hayes Valley, Gangs of San Francisco offers a range of shirts celebrating the city's past. Dig the Sutro Baths ruins? Grab a Fleishacker Diving Club tee. Did you know Haight Street used to have a water park? Tell all your friends with a Haight Street Chutes shirt. The design work and silkscreen talent of Laureano Faedi, the man behind Gangs of San Francisco, is simply impeccable. Rep your city the right way, and grab some of his gear.

Best Place to Board Your Furry Friend
Mission: Cats
3150 18th St., Suite 103, 415-437-2287 or missioncats.net
No pet owner ever wants to leave a kitty at home, but sometimes it can't be avoided. If you and your feline companion must be separated, make sure you hook them up with a stay at Mission: Cats. Stocked with climbing towers, nap caves, and prime sunbathing window spots, it's all about giving kitties a pampered paradise to pass the time until you return to rescue them. For those who simply can't stand to be away from their furry family member, Mission: Cats has seven webcams where you can check in on your pet from afar. (Seriously, though — go enjoy yourself. They'll be fine).



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